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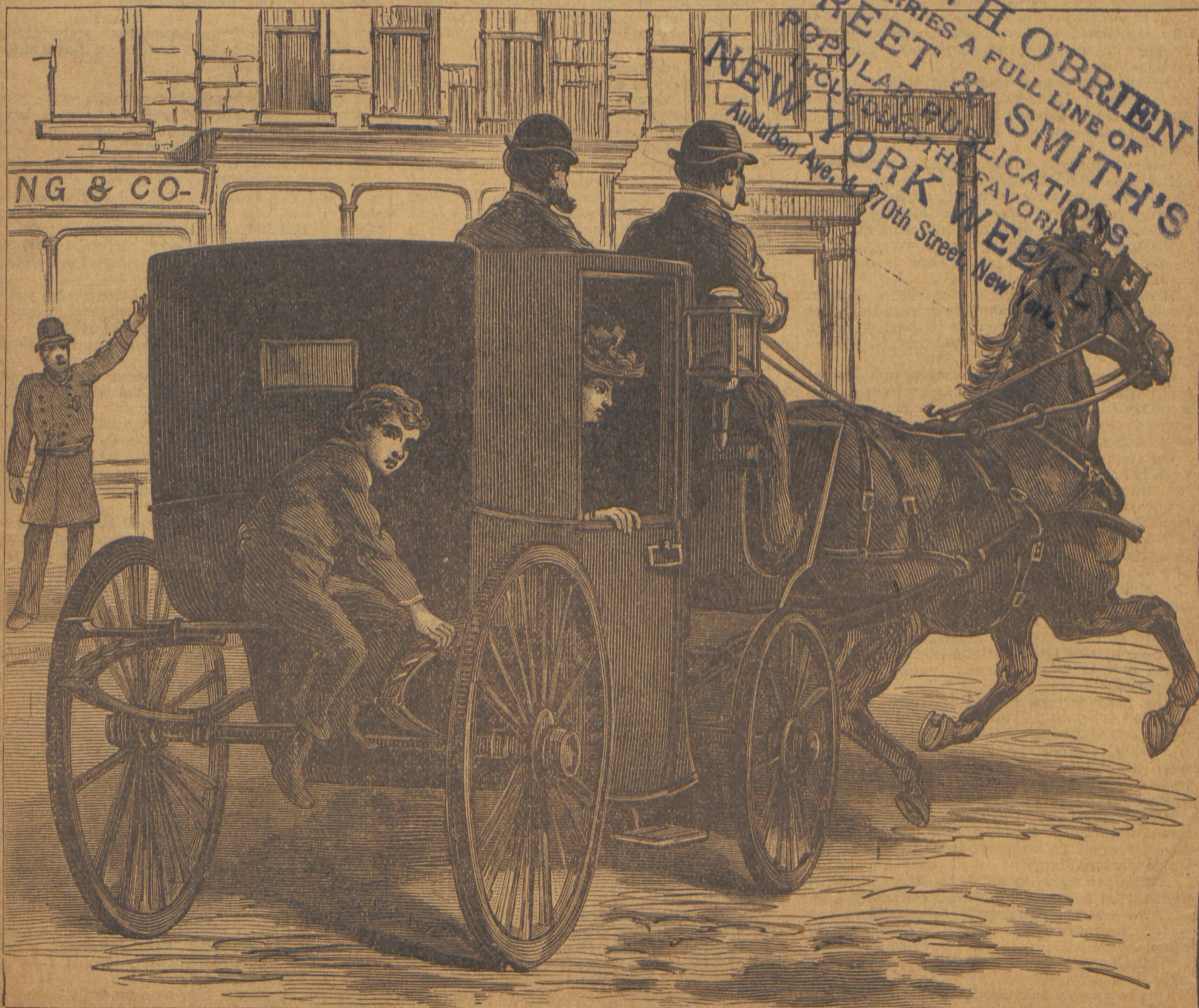
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# Jubilee Joe, the Chain-Lightning Detective

By Charles Morris, E. L. Wheeler, J. C. Cowdrick and Others.



LITTLE DID THE POOR GIRL DREAM THAT SHE HAD SUCH A FRIEND SO NEAR AT HAND, NOR THE MAN, THAT SUCH A SPY WAS ON HIS TRACK.



# Jubilee Joe,

## The Chain-Lightning Detective;

OR,

### The Lamb in the Wolf's Den.

BY

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CAPT. MARK WILTON, J. C. COWDRICK,  
AND DETECTIVE DOUGLASS.

#### CHAPTER I.

[BY J. C. COWDRICK.]

#### A NIGHT-SCENE IN THE QUAKER CITY.

PHILADELPHIA, 1876.

A beautiful night in mid-summer.

The moon, in all its glory, round-faced and golden, hung over the city, and shed its mellow light upon the busy scenes, while the thousands of stars in the vast, unmeasured space beyond, shone like brilliant diamonds set in the blue dome of the heavens.

For many weeks past the staid old city had been in an unusual uproar, night and day.

Uncle Sam's great Jubilee show in honor of his one-hundredth birthday was at its height, and thousands upon thousands of children were there from all parts of his broad domain.

Hotels and lodging-houses were filled to their utmost capacity, and still hundreds of people could find no place to lay their weary heads. From morn till night, and from night till morn again, the streets were crowded.

At the stations of the various railroads especially, the crowd was an almost constant feature. People were coming and people were going at all hours, day and night.

On this particular night the station of the Pennsylvania Railroad, at Thirty-second and Market streets, late as the hour was, presented an unusual scene of hurry, bustle and confusion.

Trains were late, owing to a hitch somewhere along the line of that great iron highway, and the crowd was unusually large. Between the waiting-rooms and the gates leading to the train-shed, was one solid mass of humanity.

The gates being opened, the crowd gradually melted away, and in a short time trains were coming and going as usual.

It was after two o'clock in the morning when the last section of a belated train from the West rolled into the station, and its passengers, when they alighted, looked weary and travel-worn indeed.

One among them was a strikingly-beautiful girl, perhaps eighteen years of age, who appeared to be traveling entirely alone. In her hand she carried a small grip-sack, which was, as afterward appeared, the only baggage she possessed.

On stepping from the train she looked half-timidly around for a moment, and then followed the other passengers toward the exit gates.

The train had stopped on the second track from the long platform on Thirty-second street, which was used chiefly for the delivery of milk from the cars of the milk-train, and some parts of which were in deep shadow.

The girl had almost reached the gates, when suddenly a man sprung down from the platform mentioned, where he had been standing in the shadow at the end of the baggage-room, snatched the grip-sack from her hand, and sprung back again ere she could scarcely realize what had happened.

The next instant though she uttered a loud cry, and tried to follow the thief, but the platform proved too high for her to get upon.

"What's th'matter?" suddenly inquired a boy, who raised himself from a baggage-truck where he had lain down to catch a few hours of sleep, and whom the girl's cry awakened.

"That man!" cried the girl, pointing to the retreating form of the thief, who was fast disappearing across an adjacent vacant lot, "he has stolen my hand-bag!"

Waiting to hear no more, the boy sprung up and started in pursuit; but, unfortunately, as he darted across the platform he fell, and for a moment lay almost senseless from the force of the shock.

When he regained his feet, the man was out of sight.

This boy was a fair sample of the city's street-Arab, or gamin. His name was Joe Bindley, but of late he had been dubbed, by his boy com-

panions, "Jubilee Joe." He was about fifteen years of age, strong and well-built, and, when his face was clean, decidedly good-looking.

He was a favorite with the railroad men at the station, and was allowed to come and go at will, and to sleep where he would, so long as he chose a place where he was out of the way.

Thus it was that he was asleep on the truck under the train-shed on the night of which I write.

Seeing that it was useless to attempt to follow the man further, he turned back, and sprung down from the platform to where the girl was standing, now weeping bitterly.

"I guess your hand-bag is a goner, miss," he said. "No use chasin' a man after he's got out of sight. Don't cry though, but come along and tell th' station-master about it." And the boy conducted the poor girl into the ladies' waiting-room, and then set out to find the official he had named.

"Where is the young lady?" the station-master asked, when he found a moment to spare to listen to the boy's story.

"She's in th' ladies' waitin'-room," was the reply. "Come, an' I'll show her to you."

The station-master followed his young guide, and the girl was soon found.

"I am the station-master, miss," he said. "This boy tells me you have been robbed. It is really too bad. Is there anything I can do for you? Shall I send for a carriage to take you to your friends?"

"Oh, sir, I have no friends!" the girl sobbed; "not a friend in all the world."

"Where are you going?"

"I hardly know, sir. I came here, from a small town near Lancaster, to find employment. My aunt died a few weeks ago, and she was the only friend I had."

"But, surely," said the station-master, kindly, "you must have had some objective point in view, when you started alone to come to this great city?"

"I had the address of a lady, sir," the girl replied, "which was given to me by a lady at Lancaster, to whom I told my story. But that, as well as most of the little sum of money I possessed, was in my hand-bag. I am almost penniless. Oh! what will I do?"

"Can you not remember the lady's name and address?"

"I remember her name, sir, Mrs. Bradford; but I cannot remember where she lives."

"May I ask your name?"

"My name is Laura Murray, sir."

"Well, can we not telegraph to your friend at Lancaster, and thus obtain Mrs. Bradford's address for you?"

"Most unfortunately, sir, that lady's card, with her address on it, was in my hand-bag too. I do not now remember even her name."

"Then she was a stranger to you?"

"Yes, sir. She spoke kindly to me when she saw me weeping in the station at Lancaster, and I told her my story."

"You are unfortunate, indeed. You must remain here till daylight, and then I will try and do something for you. Meanwhile beware of strangers. Do not make friends too readily with any one who may address you."

"Oh! thank you, sir!" the girl exclaimed. "You are kind. I will do as you say."

The station-master and Jubilee Joe turned away, leaving the girl alone. Neither of them had noticed the evil-looking face of a man who had been listening to the conversation, standing just outside one of the open windows.

"So," that man muttered to himself, as he, too, turned and walked away, "your name is Laura Murray, is it, miss? And you'd like to find a Mrs. Bradford? Now, I wonder if I can't help you out of your difficulty?" and as he muttered the words he winked one of his cruel eyes in a sly and knowing manner.

Going around to the opposite side of the station, he roused a sleeping cabman, held a short conversation with him, and then returned and made his way, with a business-like air, direct to the station-master's office.

"Is the last train from Lancaster in, sir?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; just arrived a few minutes ago."

"Did you notice a young lady, sir, who came alone, and who no doubt acted like a cat in a strange garret?"

"I did see such a person," the station-master answered; "but who are you, sir?"

"My name is Gibbs. I am in the employ of Mrs. Bradford, who resides on Bainbridge street. She received a telegram last evening from a friend at Lancaster to look out for a young lady, a Miss Murray, coming in on a late train, alone; and I've been kept a-runnin' here all night to

find her. Do you say you *did* see such a person, sir?"

"Yes," said the station-master; "but wait a moment, please."

And he went into the ladies' waiting-room again and spoke to the friendless girl.

"Do you think you would remember the name of the street on which Mrs. Bradford resides, if you heard it spoken?" he asked.

"I think I would, sir; I read it over so many times. It is strange that it slipped my mind at all."

"Was it Bainbridge street?"

"Oh, yes; that is the name, I am sure!" the girl cried joyfully.

Cruel fate! How, among the hundreds of streets in the great city had the man happened to name the right one? Was there a plot back of it all which did not appear on the surface? or, was the girl mistaken?

Returning to the office, the station-master said:

"The young lady you are looking for is in the waiting-room. Come, and I'll point her out to you."

And he led the way.

"That jigger may be true blue," muttered Jubilee Joe, who was in the office and had listened to the man's story, "but I don't just fancy th' cut of his jib. I guess Jubilee Joseph will have to go along, and see th' end of this little affair."

And hurrying out to the truck where he had been sleeping, he put his blacking-box in a safe place—for he was a boot-black, be it known—and then sauntered around to where he could see and hear all that took place in the ladies' waiting-room.

"Excuse me, miss," said the man, when he approached the girl in company with the station-master, "is your name Murray?"

"Yes, sir."

"And are you from Lancaster? and looking for Mrs. Bradford, who resides on Bainbridge street?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then I am here to take you to her home. She received a telegram last evening from a lady friend at Lancaster, requesting her to look out for you. Are you ready to go?"

The girl looked to the station-master, helplessly, to see what her reply should be.

"I think it is all right," the station-master said. "But," he added, turning to the man, "who is this Mrs. Bradford?"

"She is a well-to-do lady, sir, who devotes most of her time to the many charitable societies to which she belongs."

"Well, miss, I think you have found good friends," the station-master then said, "and I would advise you to go to the lady at once."

"Very well," said the girl, as she rose from her seat, "I am ready."

She thanked the station-master for his kindness, and the man then led the way from the room. Opening the door of a cab, which stood near by, the driver of which was the one he had spoken to a few minutes previously on the opposite side of the station, he assisted the girl to enter, and then springing up on the seat beside the driver he said "Home," and the cab whirled away.

Meanwhile, on seeing the cab the girl was to enter, Jubilee Joe left the station and posted himself in the shadow of the wall over the mouth of the tunnel of the Junction Railroad, and when the cab came down and turned into Market street he sprang out and caught hold behind, swinging his feet up underneath as only a street-boy can.

"Bet your new shoes with th' Centennial buckles on, old hoss," he said to himself, "if everything ain't O. K. here you'll hear music in the air, or my name ain't Joe. I'm chain-lightning after you—you bet!"

Little did the poor girl dream that she had such a friend so near at hand, nor the man, that such a spy was on his track.

When the cab came to the Market street bridge, however, a policeman, noble specimen of his kind, cried out:

"Hi! there, boy! git off that kerr'age! There's a boy on behind, driver!"

The cab was stopped at once, and Joe had to drop off and take to his heels. He started to run in the same direction the cab was going, but the policeman stopped him.

"No, ye don't!" said the officer. "You want to run ahead, an' then ketch on ag'in. You can't do it this time, though. You'd best go back th' way ye came."

"Say, you great, big, overgrown monument of ignorance!" cried Joe, "if I were only big enough, I'd kick th' stuffin' out of you! To hear



you talk, any one might think you own this village! You just let me go past!"

"You've got too much tongue, boy," said the policeman, as he tried to catch hold of Joe, which was impossible, "an' if I git hold of ye I'll twist yer ears fer ye."

"If you do!" Joe cried, "an' I'll take care that you don't! Say, are you goin' to let me go past?"

"Not till I pull yer ears, I ain't."

"Look out, then, for I'm a-goin'! I'm chain-lightning—I am!" and as he uttered these words Joe tried to dodge by. It was some moments, though, before he succeeded in doing so, and then the cab had cleared the bridge, turned into a cross-street, and was out of sight.

"Hang policemen!" cried Jubilee, when out of the officer's reach. "Now, I've lost that cab, after all! Never mind, though; I'll bet I left a scratch on the back of it that won't wash off in a hurry!" And, as he spoke, he drew from his pocket a large nail, with which he had made the mark and threw it at the offending officer.

## CHAPTER II.

[BY ED. L. WHEELER.]

MR. ANDREW ALLAN.

ALTHOUGH frustrated in his attempt to follow the carriage, Jubilee Joe was not discouraged, for he reasoned that he would see it again at the depôt, and thus stand a fair chance of learning to what part of Bainbridge street Miss Murray had been driven.

That Gibbs was a rascal he now was satisfied, and therefore meant no good to the girl.

Deliberating a few minutes, Joe continued down Market street to Eighteenth—into which the carriage had turned, going southward; but when Joe reached the corner it was nowhere in sight.

"Well, I'm losin' time for nothin', by goin' it blind," Joe mused, passing through Eighteenth to Chestnut, and then going westward again, *en route* to the depôt. "I guess it won't gain me anything to search any further, until I kin get on track of the carriage. Blame that copper! ef I kin fall onto any sick eggs I'll give him a pepperin' with 'em, some dark night. 'Ca'se sum big-futted foreigners git blue togs and brass buttons, they caleylate they kin run ther hull village."

Crossing Chestnut street bridge he thus avoided another encounter with the officer, and reached the depôt in safety.

After a stroll through the crowd in the great station-house Joe passed over to the south side of Market street, where he entered a drug store which he knew was open all night, to examine the City Directory.

Turning to the "B" index, he sought the name of "Bradford;" but although the name was not an uncommon one, there chanced to be no one of that name living on Bainbridge street.

"That settles that," he mused. Then he turned over leaf after leaf, until he came to the name of "Gibbs."

There happened to be more Gibbsses than Bradfords, and examination elicited the fact that one Archibald Gibbs lived at No. — Bainbridge street.

"That's my man," Joe soliloquized, as he closed the Directory. "I happen to know purty well where that locality is, and I'll not more than wait fer daybreak ere I'll know something about Miss Murray's whereabouts."

Returning to the depôt, he sought the station-master and informed him of his suspicions, his search of the Directory, and its result.

"That Gibbsey is a snoozer, if I know boarding-house stew from luxury!" he declared; "and I'm 'feard th' young leddy hes fallen inter bad company, sir!"

"Oh, I guess not, Jubilee," the station-master replied, wearily, for his numerous duties had plainly fatigued him. "The fellow appeared to know what he was talking about, and I presume if you take the pains you will find Miss Murray safely quartered with her friend."

"Mebbe," Joe said, doubtfully, "but I don't b'lieve it. At any rate, I'm goin' to investigate the matter; and if you see Gibbsey around here again, keep an eye on him, and see if you don't ketch him up to other fly tricks."

Promising to do so, the station-master turned away, evidently not taking much stock in the gamin's suspicion, while Joe, seeing no prospect of getting any more jobs during the night, stowed himself away on a truck for a couple of hours' much-needed rest and repose.

As soon as it came daylight he was up and bustling about, wide awake and jolly.

Ere the street-railway passenger-traffic had fairly begun he had earned nearly a dollar, and was preparing to start off down-town when

he was "shouldered" by a recent train-arrival—a man aged about twenty-six years, trimly built, neatly dressed, and decidedly good-looking—skin of Grecian whiteness, a delicate blonde mustache, eyes pale and lustrous, yet keen and penetrating in their glance.

Yet, something in his nervous demeanor once arrested the observant lad's attention.

"Excuse me, my boy," he said, as his hand fell upon Jubilee's shoulder; "I would like a little information. Will you grant it?"

Joe's keen eyes made a lightning inventory of the questioner before he vouchsafed a reply.

"Well, I reckon I can try," he answered with a twinkle in his eye, "although I'll take it for granted that Ulysses ain't in the city, at present. D'ye wanter know where Broad and Fourteenth street is? or has some one been goin' through yer?"

"Well, no—that is, not exactly. You see, I am a stranger in Philadelphia; and I presumed I might learn from you or one of your sort that which I want to know, without taking the trouble to hunt a Directory."

"One of my sort!" Joe ejaculated. "See here! what fer a sort d'ye take me fer, anyhow?"

"Why, a street-Arab, to be sure, my son. You do not presume to be an alderman or the mayor, do you?"

"Nix-ee, McGinnis! but I *do* presume to weigh just as many ounces to th' pound, and do presume to consider myself jes' as honest as ther biggest of 'em, plug hat an' all. So, if there's anything you want to know, spit 'er out!"

"Well, what I want to know is this: Do you know the location of the — Insurance Company's office?"

"As well as I know ther nose on my face when there's a dead cat in ther gutter," Joe promptly responded, "an' my nose ain't partial to cats, nohow."

"Well, where is the office?" was the next inquiry of the stranger, who was evidently no admirer of Joseph's ready tongue.

"See here!" the boy said, giving his interrogator another glance from head to foot, "before you go to askin' too many questions about corporations an' the like, supposin' ye give us a hint as to yer name, antecedents, bizness standin' an' bank account? We *slow* sort, as hangs around here, are onter all o' ther fast inquiries, an' our love fer ther Declaration of Independence won't 'low us ter git took in by any sharps, if we can help ourselves. See?"

The stranger turned partly upon his heel, with an expression of disgust upon his countenance.

"Will you, or will you not, answer my question?" he demanded, impatiently.

"Oh! you bet I *will*!" Joe replied, "an' what's more, I'll conduct ye right to ther place ef ye'll send a dollar a-glidin' down inter my pocket."

"It's a bargain, my boy—it's a bargain!"

"Well, the office will be open by the time we kin git there," Joe replied, glancing at the clock in the waiting-room; "so fork over yer dollar if I'm goin' ter steer ther boat. Bizness is bullion to me."

The man produced a well-filled purse, and gave Joe the required price; then they boarded a car eastward bound.

Little did the sharp and shrewd gamin imagine then that the man he was guiding knew the city as well, if not even better, than he knew it himself!

Half an hour later saw them in the vicinity of Fourth and Chestnut streets, where they entered a prominent insurance office.

Joe passed inside with the man he had guided without being invited to do so; but impelled by a desire to know the stranger's business.

"My name is Allan—Andrew Allan," the stranger said, in reply to an interrogation as to what could be done for him. "I wish to take out an insurance policy on my life; and as the business standing of this corporation has been favorably reported to me I have concluded to deal with you."

"We shall be glad to add your name to our already long list of policy-holders, Mr. Allan," said the vice-president, Mr. Ezra Bond, who had opened the interview. "Do you desire to insure immediately?"

"I do, sir. Although physically in perfect health, I have for some months had a foreboding that I will not live to see the end of the present year. Of course, it is but a foreboding; nevertheless it sometimes gives me great depression of spirits; so I have concluded to make the necessary provisions in behalf of a dear friend, in case I am suddenly taken off."

"Oh, certainly! certainly! It is a duty

which we owe to our friends to leave behind us some provision for their protection," the vice-president said, with reassuring business tact. "I shall be happy to fill out a form for you. Your name is Andrew Allan. Of what place?"

"Of Lancaster, this State."

"Your age?"

"Twenty-six years, three months, and ten days."

"Your business occupation?"

"Simply that of gentleman-of-leisure."

"I presume you are familiarly known in Lancaster?"

"I am not, sir. Although I have resided there several years, I have but few speaking-acquaintances, and yet, I imagine, almost any one on the street could point me out and call me by name."

"Oh, yes: of course. And, now about the amount you wish to insure for, Mr. Allan?"

Allan was silent a moment, apparently in reflection, his gaze directed upon the polished floor.

"Why, twenty thousand dollars, I guess," he said, finally. "I can carry that amount without embarrassment."

"To whom is this amount to be made payable, in case of your death?"

"To Laura Murray!"

Jubilee Joe could scarce repress an exclamation of astonishment.

He did, however, and Allan did not notice his great surprise and interest.

"What place is this young lady a resident of?" the interrogator went on.

"God only knows—I do not!" Allan replied, manifesting considerable agitation. "The last I knew of her she lived in Pittsburg. We were engaged to be married when we were children, though I have never seen the young lady in my life, or at least not since we were children in England. That she is living, however, I have no doubt; and in case of my death I wish a search to be made for her until, living or dead, she is found; the cost of the search to be deducted from the amount of the policy. My lawyer is so instructed."

"You understand, I suppose, Mr. Allan," the vice-president added, "that you must undergo a medical examination by our physician?"

"Certainly, sir."

The company's physician was called, and after the usual examination he declared the applicant to be in perfectly sound health.

"It is as I told you," Allan remarked; "I never felt better. I have just returned from a sea voyage. I shall spend a few days here in the city, and then get home to Lancaster."

Mr. Bond busied himself at writing for several minutes—then looked inquiringly at the watchful Joe.

"This lad—?" he began.

"Is merely a street Arab I employed to show me the way here," Allan replied. "I guess I will not require your services any longer," he added, turning to Joe. "I can find my way around now, I presume."

Joe arose and bowed himself out of their presence.

"All right, Mr. Allan," he mused; "if *that's* all you want of me, I'm not kickin'; but I've tumbled onto somethin' that will make Laura Murray smole a smile, in case you should give up the ghost *this* Centennial year. It strikes me ruther a leetle curious, though, how Laura Murray could live near Lancaster, as *she* said, and also at Pittsburg, as *you* say. I'll bet my boots there's a full-grown colored gentleman in th' fence somewhere!"

"Yer age is twenty-six years, three months, an' ten days, aire it? I'll jest remember *that*."

## CHAPTER III.

[BY E. L. WHEELER.]

JOE ON THE TRAIL.

JOE did not tarry in the vicinity, but betook himself thoughtfully toward Bainbridge street.

"His royal jigs don't kinder expect he's goin' to last th' year out, eh?" he mused as he strode along. "Wonder how a feller would feel wi' that opinion of hisself these times of 'skin yer neighbor'?"

"Strikes me most people would be lookin' about smart fer a cast-iron refrigerator filled with unmeltable ice. 'Stead o' that, Andy, th' dear old duck, is figgerin' fer stamps; an' my name ain't Jubilee Joe ef I ain't dead onto his haze. He wants ter shuffle off in style, an' go to ther funeral wi' brass-band accompaniment. Ef he leaves his boodle to Laura, he reckons on her givin' him a first-class send-off. Howsomever, I presume ef Laura knew of th' prospects ahead, she'd go ter work in a laundry and save up money enough ter provide ther brass band, right away. Maybe, tho', ef I hunt her up, an' can



find his nibs, an' they make up an' get married, his nibs will be so tickled that he'll commit suicide an' leave me the twenty thousand! My, oh! but wouldn't I put on ther lugs then! I'd buy th' hull Centennial fer a specerlation, to say nothin' about Elm avenue an' Shantytown."

Once in the vicinity of the alleged abiding-place of Archibald Gibbs, however, he looked sharply about him. The neighborhood abounded with places of questionable character, many of the grim-fronted brick tenements and rum-mills having the repute of being "fences" for thieves, and a retreat for even more reprehensible criminals, from the smart, shrewd burglar to the more brutal garroter and murderous rough.

Joe knew enough about the locality not to have any difficulty in spotting the house where Gibbs was said by the Directory to reside.

It was one of the oldest houses in the row, and the ground floor was occupied as a "bucket-shop" saloon by one Patsy O'Neill. There was a side entrance, upon the door of which was a sign announcing that "Boarding & Lodging" could be obtained within.

Taking a good survey of the place, Joe passed along to the next corner, where a negro was busily engaged in "working" a little bed of mortar, with which to repair some adjacent chimney.

"Hello, dad—shine 'em up fer ye?" Joe demanded, pausing and squatting upon his box. "Make 'em so bright you'll think your eyes have gone on a Centennial eclipse."

"Go 'way long off, chile!" was the gruff response. "Dese yer boots nebber need no black-in' on de outside, 'ca'se dar's plenty ob black on de inside."

"Don't say so! Guess you're a cute coon, one of these days!"

"Deed, an' I'se no coon. I'se a gentleman. No common nigger 'bout me!"

"Ain't, eh? Well, that's what I tho't. Look kinder like an Upper-Ten. S'pose ye live 'round here?"

"Yes, sah; right ober dar in dat yar yonder tree-story house."

"Phew! I want to know! S'pose you knows all ther neighbors, eh?"

"Deed, bub, I knows all I wants to ob 'em. Don' 'sociate wid none ob de common trash."

"D'ye know a man by th' name of Gibbs who hangs out over at Patsy's?"

"Gibbs!" and the colored aristocrat looked hard at his interrogator, "Gibbs! Look yar, chile, don' try to poke fun at me, or I'll cut you, I will, shua!"

"Why, who's trying ter poke fun at yer? What's th' defickelty between you an' Gibbs?"

"Defickelty! Look yar! didn't dat yar Gibbs larn my gal 'Lize to sw'ar at her dad an' mam, an' drink rum?"

"She'm up de Pennypack now, fer stealin' from de parson's colleckshun-box. Defickelty! I jes' done tole you, boy, dat yar Gibbs am a bad man, an' if yo' don' keep 'way from him, you git corrupt!"

The now wide-awake Joe hitched his stool nearer to the curb.

"See here, old man," he said, impressively, "you don't like Gibbs?"

"Deed, an' goodness knows I don't, honey. Dat yar man am bad, cl'ar fru an' fru."

"That's what I want ter know about. I've been tryin' ter git p'int about him. Now, see here, I reckon you hain't no objection ter havin' a couple of extra dollars in yer pocket?"

"Deed I habn't, chile. Dey come won'ful handy."

"Then answer me a few questions, an' ye shall have 'em. What is the character of Patsy's place?"

"Bad—drefful bad."

"What sort o' men put up there?"

"Bad—drefful bad. Thieves, 'snatchers,' gamblers—deed, ebery sort."

"What does Gibbs do?"

"Snatches stiffs, sometimes."

"Indeed!"

And here Jubilee scratched his head, as if he had suddenly been struck with an idea.

"Does a Mrs. Bradford live there?"

"No, sah. No woman lib dar, 'cept de capt'in's daughter."

"The 'captain's'?"

"Yes, sah; Cap'n Mark's Sally."

"Are you sure there is not a young woman in ther house—one that came there late last night?"

"Oh! dat was de 'capt'in's' daughter, sah!—just arrived from off somewheres. She an' de 'capt'in' com'd home in a cab."

"Sure? Positive?"

"Deed I is. See'd 'em git out and go into de saloon."

"Then there's a whoppin' lie out somewheres!" Joe muttered, to himself. "Ef that gal at ther depôt was puttin' on all them whimpers she's a hoss at it. She either was or else wasn't what she pretended; an' if she wasn't, she an' Gibbsy are workin' some big game."

"Might have been Gibbs or a pard of his, who snatched her sachel. But what object was there in it? There's a mystery here, somewhere, an' Andy Allan figgers in it, or else why the insurance?"

"There must be a Laura Murray concerned, somehow, or else the policy wouldn't 'a' bin ordered drawn in her favor—Hello!"

The door of O'Neill's saloon had opened and Gibbs and another man stepped out upon the street.

"Now fer it!" Jubilee mused. "I must shadder them, an' try an' find Miss Murray, if such a person exists."

And gathering up his box, he dodged around the corner.

#### CHAPTER IV.

[BY CHARLES MORRIS.]

#### THE TABLE-IMP.

JUBILEE JOE soon found that he had no easy job on hand in shadowing the two men who had just emerged from Patsy O'Neill's saloon.

It was not that they had any special reason to fear pursuit, but they were men who had been so often under the eyes of the police that they were cautious to the very toes, and took no step without knowing just where their foot was going to be planted.

Gibbs's companion was a specially suspicious chap. His little, half-shut eyes kept rolling everywhere, and it would have been a cute spy that could follow that man far without being discovered.

He was a tall, lantern-jawed man, with long, stiff, sandy hair, and carried himself as straight as a die. His clothes were somewhat seedy, but were worn with a show of military smartness.

"Sure as shootin' that's him! That coon's 'Cap'n' Mark," muttered Joe. "But I'll bet a pig ag'in' a cocoanut that he never sarved in ther milletary, or carried a bagonet in ther home guards. He's high-cockalorum in ther footpads' brigade, he is. And if I don't tie his eye-winkers into a hard knot afore I'm through, why, I'll sell my box an' go 'prentice to a cobbler."

Flinging his box jauntily over his shoulder, Joe jogged along, on the other side of the street from the two men. To all appearance he did not know that such men were in existence, his whole soul seeming set on finding a job.

"Black 'em! Black 'em!" he kept lustily calling. "Shine 'em up, mister? Put sich a polish on them flatboats as you won't know yerself in 'em. Make you think yer mammy changed you fur a good-lookin' baby in ther cradle. Shine 'em! Shine 'em!"

Joe's persistent cry at length brought him a customer. This was a slab-sided countryman, who was lounging along with a shabby valise, and boots that looked as if he had recently been wading in a plowed field.

"Here, boy," he called. "Reckon you'd better give me a shine-up. How much do you charge?"

Joe halted, looked down at the number twelve stogies, cocked his left eye, and winked his right.

"Guess ther tariff'll be 'bout a silver quarter fur that job, mister."

"A quarter, you young rascal? Want to rob me, do you? S'pose you think I'm a green-horn."

"Didn't dream o' sich a thing," rejoined Joe. "Any blind man with a glass eye could twig you was a college professor, or a railroad president. But if I'm ter tackle them there bug-squashers, you've got ter shell out lively. I don't take wholesale jobs at retail prices."

"You confounded son of a pickled mackerel! are you trying to chaff me?" roared the countryman. "Blame your ugly eyes, you want somebody to kick the impudence out of you. And I'm just the chap to do it."

He made a rush at Joe. But he might as well have tried to nab a mosquito. Joe ran lightly ahead, just out of reach, laughing in a way that doubled the man's rage.

"It's jubilee times, boss. Prices is riz," he called out.

"And you'll rise, if I can get the toe of my boot under your corporation."

"Scuse me," answered Joe. "Like ter 'comerdeate you, but can't afford to wait. Got a invitation to take dinner with ther mayor."

The enraged countryman chased Joe for more than two squares. Then he gave it up in dis-

gust, puffing and blowing with his exertions. Joe instantly unshipped the box from his shoulder, and took a seat on it, looking at his baffled pursuer with a glance of irritating impudence.

"Wouldn't you like ter come along to that dinner party, stranger? Goin' ter feed high, you bet! Little pigs on toast, an' buttered parsnips. Like to have yer."

"I'd like to have you, and an ox-hide to teach you manners," muttered the countryman, as he turned away in disgust.

Joe picked up his box and jogged on. This specimen of street-Arab impudence had not been without an object. The boy did not want a job, and took this way to get out of it. And he wanted a good excuse to follow his game, without being suspected by the suspicious "Captain," whose rolling eyes were never still for a second.

He had now been for some time in pursuit, and a considerable distance had been gone over. His run from the countryman had taken him ahead of Gibbs and the "Captain." He walked steadily on, satisfied that they were close behind him.

Reaching the next corner he stopped and looked in a store window, as an excuse for glancing back along the street.

To his utter surprise the men had disappeared. He rubbed his eyes. But not a trace of them was to be seen.

A quarter of a square back was the opening to a narrow cross-street. Joe knew it well. It was a place renowned for its English chop and ale houses. He ran back with all haste to the corner of this street, and gazed down it. He was just in time. One of his men was out of sight. The other was just stepping into the open door of a house.

Jubilee Joe scratched his head. An idea quickly popped into it. Hiding his box in a safe corner he hurried after them.

"They've dug into Johnny Flynn's," he declared. "Lucky I know Johnny. I'm goin' ter see what's in ther wood."

In a moment more he entered the saloon. The door opened into a short entry, and this into the tap-room. The latter was square, gloomy, and low-ceilinged, dingy and blackened with tobacco smoke. The floor was sanded, and was provided with a number of small tables. The two men whom Joe was after stood at the bar, talking to the landlord.

Joe looked slyly around him. There was a long table in the corner covered with a long cloth that reached to the floor. The men's backs were toward him. With a wink to the round-faced landlord, who recognized him, Joe slipped around the room by the wall, and plunged under this table, the drooping cloth quite concealing him.

The two men, oblivious to this movement, continued their talk with the landlord.

"He's here, then?"

"As sure has a 'oss is a 'oss."

"Tell him we're on hand. And let's have a brimmer of your best home-brew."

The landlord bustled around, placed chairs to the end of the table under which Joe was hidden, and set on it a brimming beaker of ale, with a brace of tall glasses.

"Ye'll find that prime. Aren't none better this side o' hold Hingland."

The youthful spy heard the landlord leave the room. The two men at the table poured out glasses of ale, and took a long draft of the foaming beverage.

"Tain't bad," said the voice of Gibbs. "I hope t'other job 'll pan out as well."

"If Tom Smith only puts through his share correct," answered the "Captain," in a grating voice.

"Drop all that," cried Gibbs. "Tom Smith is sunk in a simoon. Andrew Allan has taken his place. I guess Andy can fill the bill far better than Tom."

"If he can only play respectable."

"He can do it. Tom's up to snakes. Or least-ways I should say Andy's up to silk chokers. I ain't afeard of that young man."

The two men laughed, as if highly amused.

"I hope he'll do it as well as we've done our share of the speculation."

"What did you do with the girl's hand-bag?" asked Gibbs.

"Pocketed the cash lining. Guess I earned that for the risk. It wasn't much, anyhow. And as for the papers—"

"Yes. That's what we're here for."

"I think they give her pedigree pretty complete. Got them here. We can take them in."

"Good. Are you sure of Sally? Is she smart enough?"

"If she ain't smart, there's no gal going that knows beans. And she's enough like that Laura



Murray to easy play her game. You've got the real Laura safe?"

"Well, I should smile. If she gets out of old 'Mother' Hickley's hands before I give the wink, then a seven-yearer can walk out of Cherry Hill at a month's notice. I ain't the sort of fellow that makes blunders."

At this moment some other customers entered the room, and the voices of the speakers fell. The landlord returned at the same moment, another person following him into the room.

As may be imagined, the boy under the table had heard this conversation with deep interest. He was fast getting hold of the thread of the mystery that had so far puzzled him.

"There's the gents as wants to see ye, Mr. Hallan," said the landlord.

Joe started. So they were to have an interview with Mr. Allen?

Greetings passed between the three conspirators. They seated themselves at the table beside which Gibbs and the "Captain" had so far been standing.

"Take a swig, Tom—Andy, I mean."

"Don't care if I do."

Joe recognized the voice of the lately-misured man.

"And now, let us have it in a nut-shell. Did it work? Have you hit the mark?"

"I reckon. Twenty thousand risk. It's done, and—"

"Hush! There are ears about. Ha! what the blazes is this under the table?"

He had stretched out his feet and brought them in contact with Joe's person.

"Feels like a dog," said the "Captain."

"Kick it out! Confound the lazy brute!"

"Old up, there!" cried Johnny Flynn, the landlord. "Don't you kick that dog! I don't 'low nobody but me to kick that dog."

"Get him out of here, then! We don't want no dog under our table!"

He gave a slight kick. It was followed by a low growl. Joe had taken the hint.

"The man that kicks that dog kicks me!" cried Johnny, angrily. "Let 'im halone. He hain't doin' no 'arm."

The men subsided. They continued their conversation in a low tone. Joe, his ears muffled by the cloth, could only catch a few words of it. He made out that they were laying plans, and judged it was some scheme to beat the insurance company, but he could not catch its points.

He also discovered that the "Captain" had produced the documents stolen from the hand-bag of Laura Murray. As far as he could make out they seemed to be composed of letters and a sort of diary, giving many events in the girl's life.

Some few words, however, came clearly to Joe's ears and gave him a hint that told much to his quick brain.

"Sally must study these papers," said Gibbs. "She will want to know what she has been doing all her life. Then with the letter she received at Pittsburg she will be ready to go to Mrs. Bradford's. To-morrow she must arrive there—from the train, you know."

A significant laugh succeeded these words. The "Captain" thrust his feet carelessly forward. And then he cried out sharply:

"Who says that's a dog? It's a human of some sort, I'll take my oath to that!"

He started up, and snatched up the mug and the glasses.

"Upset the table! There's a spy under it!"

No sooner said than done. The table was hastily overturned, and revealed the form of Joe. He was doubled up in an odd attitude, one arm flung over his face.

A volley of curses came from the conspirators. "Kick him over! Snatch him up and let's look at him! Is the young hound asleep or shamming?"

Joe seemed in fact to be sound asleep. Even a rough thrust from the foot of the "Captain" only brought a groaning sound from him. He rolled over on his face, and lay motionless.

The landlord hurried forward.

"What 'ave ye got there?" he asked. "'Tain't the dog, then? Why, 'ang me if it hain't that little mutton-head of a Joe Buster. Best let him be. When that boy goes to sleep he means biz. Ye might as well try to wake hup a railroad sleeper, and be done with hit. Hey there, Joe; stir yer lively trotters!"

He rolled the boy back and forth with his foot—but with no more effect than if he had been rolling a bag of potatoes.

"You see 'ow hit is. You could shoot 'im out o' a seven-pounder through a brick wall, and 'e'd snore right on."

The men looked down on Joe for a minute, and then turned away.

"I bet I'd wake him up, if he was my boy," declared the "Captain."

"What's the use? He's more out o' the way hasleep than 'e is hawake."

The conspirators turned away. They had finished their conference. Joe had played 'possum too well, it seemed, for them to doubt him longer. Paying for their liquor, they walked out of the saloon.

One eye of the boy opened slyly to follow them out. But he did not move a finger until sure they were well out of hearing.

"Come, boy, that jig's hout. Git hup, my jolly Joseph."

The boy opened his other eye, and then suddenly sprung to his feet, dancing a hornpipe on the sanded floor.

"Don't you never say I don't know sharps from flats! 'Kase if you do I'll plug yer eye!"

"What's bu'sted, boy? I twigged them chaps wasn't deacons. But, what's their dodge, and what are you hafter?"

"I'm arter them, like a nigger arter 'lasses! They're coons, from th' word go. Reg'lar rip-stavin' circus operators, as kin turn six somersets 'round a sweet pertater. But you bet Jubilee Joe ain't no slouch. I've salted 'em lively, I have! An' if I don't open their eyes wider than a toll-gate afore I give up th' job, then you kin kick this rooster into ther middle of next week."

"Stop, our wind-mill, Joe. Let's 'ear what's hin the wind."

"Has that Andy Allan took a room here?"

"E's done that same."

"Then I want you to watch him, lively. Come, I'll let you into th' game. It's about th' ugliest bit o' sport as I've ever hearn tell of."

Joe proceeded to tell to the wondering landlord what he had discovered, under a strict promise of secrecy and aid.

## CHAPTER V.

[BY MAJOR E. L. ST. VRAIN.]

JUBILEE "CHUCKS HIM ONCE FOR LUCK."

"My heyes!" exclaimed Flynn, when he had heard all of Joe's story, "this 'ere his a musty go! Hi've been twenty hodd years hin this 'ere country, han' Hi never 'eard the like hov hit before. Hi s'posed there wasn't no crooked work hin Hamerica."

"That's whar you're clean off yer horizontal perpendicularum," replied Joe. "Ef you's ter squander part o' yer inheritance on ther newspapers, you'll git onter more crooked bizness in a week than Nero-Napoleon, king o' ther Philistines, ever dreamed on."

"But don't the papers lie?" asked Flynn, thoughtfully. "Hive 'eard so."

"They lie! Ther papers lie? My innercent frien' with ther London fog still hangin' to yer ambrosial locks, I reckon yer don't know a flea-blown, full-blooded American reporter. Why, ef you so much ez mention Joshua Iscariot—you've heerd o' him, ain't ye, Johnny?—ter a reporter, he blushes red cl'ar up ter his gills. But that ain't ther p'int. W'ot d'ye think o' this hyar scheme they hev got in project?"

"Hit's a nasty job."

"Ye're right, fur mustard-plasters. But d'ye s'pose it'll work?"

"My heyes! yes. Ho' course hit'll work, hunless the perleece stop hit."

"Ther p'leece? Go hide yer diminished head, Hold Henglish Hale! Ther coppers can't stop nothin'. But, d'ye see me?"

Joe thrust his thumbs into the arm-holes of his vest and struck an attitude.

"Hi'm ha-lookin' hat you," Flynn replied.

"D'ye observe ther lurid light o' genius a-flash-in' from my eyes?"

The saloon-keeper laughed.

"Hof course, me boy."

"An' ther swellin' muscles o' my Herculean figger?"

"Certain."

"An' ther 'lectric sparks that shoot from my Samsonian locks o' ha'r?"

"To be sure."

"Wal, this 'ere is me—Jubilee Joe, E-squire, ther prize-beauty o' 1876, an' ther liberty hoshchestnut o' 1776, brought down ter future ages, preserved in alcohol, or English ale, or some sech devastatin' fluid. An' I'm ther game-rooster that's goin' ter tackle them schemers an' shake Pheladelfy dizzy, for I'm the Chain-Lightning Detective, an' don't you fergit it!"

"You!"

"ME! Spell it with big letters. Make it look like a circus-board, afore ther spring-freshets git arter it. ME!"

"Why, they'll heat you hup."

"They won't eat me up, ner down. 'Ka'se

why? Pine-apples ain't eat till they're shucked, an' I can't be shucked. No, sirree, not any fer Jubilee!"

"You're ha plucky little rat."

"D'ye take me fur a rat? Does my classical profyle remind ye o' a rodent? Not much, it don't me! I'm a blue-blooded gladiator, right from Rome by way o' ther cable, an' I'm a holy terror ter ther unwashed."

Here Joe sprung forward and seized Johnny by the neck, tragically crying:

"Ha! villain, I have thee by ther throat, an' blood hez got ter gush fer all it's wu'th. By my halidom, I'll cleave yer head with my bright blade an', oh! how like sin ther Henglish hale will flow! Wal, let her flicker!"

Then Jubilee shot backward and began to dance in a style which would surely have made him a favorite on any stage.

He was as light-footed as a professional who commands the honor of a double recall.

In the mean while, another boy had entered the saloon, and was loitering around quite close to Joe.

The new-comer was not by any means ornamental. He was a street Arab, and of a degree not an honor either to the street or the Arabs. His face was that of a juvenile "tough," and moreover, an ignorant and unprepossessing face in every way.

If Jubilee Joe and Flynn had not been so busy they might have suspected this illustrious youth was trying to spy upon them. He was certainly taking a good deal of trouble to get near them, but, as chance would have it, he had not arrived until the conversation became wholly light and irrelevant.

The boy, who was a trifle larger than Joe, had never seen the latter before, but he at once took a dislike to him, and when he saw this double-shuffle, he felt a desire to break it up.

"Durn ther young bloke!" he muttered, "he thinks he's all Pheladelfy an' a corner lot in Jersey. I don't 'low no sech gutter-pigeon ter put on airs whar I be, an' I'll jest make him sick."

He thereupon worked around back of Joe, an evil light in his eyes.

Joe did not notice him at all, and the good-natured Englishman had barely glanced at him.

Thus it came to pass that as Jubilee Joe spun around, another foot was suddenly thrust in between his, and Joe went down with a crash.

He had been suddenly and maliciously tripped.

He was on his feet in a moment, but when he came up his desire to dance was gone. He looked at the other boy with an ominous light in his eyes.

"By ther way," he observed, "do you want dance?"

"W'ot ef I do?" belligerently asked the intruder. "Ef I do, I shall."

"You may ef you don't want, but one thing ye kin set down as Gospel fact—you can't dance in my set, ner tread on my toes, ner twist yer letter-Z legs up in mine. Not by a gol-blasted sight!"

"I can't?"

"No, ye can't!"

"See yer', don't ye give me no chin, or I'll knock ther roof off yer head!" roared the unknown youth.

"No, yer won't. 'Kase why? Ye can't spell a-b-l-e in English, French or Choctaw."

The larger boy threw off his jacket and began rolling up his shirt-sleeves.

"Oh, keep that caliker down," airily advised Joe. "Ye ain't taken a bath sence Billy Penn laid out Pheladelfy, an' even yer dirty shirt is an improvement over sech crooked arms ez them."

The big boy uttered another roar and rushed forward belligerently, his fists sweeping the air as a chambermaid goes for cobwebs, but Jubilee leaped lightly to one side, and, thrusting out his foot, neatly tripped his enemy, who fell with a crash.

"This 'ere is ther time I foller suit," coolly observed Joe, "but next time I'll play a trump. Keep off, or I'll be chewed by fleas ef I won't chuck ye once, jest fer luck."

It was a fair warning, but the big boy was not to be thus checked. He was mad from his dilapidated shoes to his red hair.

He made another rush.

This time Joe did not try to avoid him, and the two met like young gladiators, much to the delight of Flynn. Still, he was afraid Joe might "get left," being the smaller of the two, and he waddled around the bar to stop the fight.

When he got there the boys were so mixed up that it was hard to tell one from the other, but by dint of close survey he discovered that the unknown was wasting his blows on the air, while



Joe was driving his scientific strokes home like a veteran.

"Oh, come an' see me!" he cried. "I ain't a fighter, but I'm ther most 'commerdatin' chap in Pheladelfy, an' I can't see ye go away hungry. 'Twould jest break my heart. Here's a little chain-lightnin', jest fer luck!"

And then it came to pass that the unknown tumbled back into Flynn's arms, and stayed there as though he was not on the war-path so much as he was.

"Go for 'im, my bloomink daisy!" said Flynn, encouragingly.

"Not by a durned sight!" replied the boy. "I know when I've got enough gruel, an' I'm chuck-full on't now. Keep off, you slugger chap; I cave!"

"Kerrect fer oysters," good-humoredly returned Joe. "I'm ready ter retire from ther pugilistic arena right now. Fightin' is an art I don't hanker ter indulge in, but yer see, when a feller tries ter bu'st my figger-head, I feel it my bounden juty ter chuck him once fer luck."

Probably the other boy thought the "luckiest" and best thing he could do was to take a change of climate, for he only waited to pick up his cap and then left the saloon.

He turned two corners, went a square, and then brought up where three men were standing.

They were Tom Smith, Gibbs and "Captain" Mark.

"Well, did you see him?" eagerly asked Tom.

"See him!" groaned the boy: "well I should smile to cachinnate ef I didn't. He seen me, too, an' he walked all over me. Look at my eye! D'ye see any signs that I'm turnin' nigger? We had a Marquis o' Queensberry waltz, an' that blamed kid wiped ther floor up wid me. See him! You bet your collar-button I seen him. He's jest chain-lightnin', he is!"

"Did he really whip you?"

"He did, boss, fer sure."

"Why, you're larger than he is."

"D'ye s'pose we settled ther question o' s'periority by gittin' onter scales an' bein' weighed? Not any. Fists did it, an' he's seven-eighths chain-lightnin' an' ther rest wild-cat. When I fight ag'in I'll tackle a man—no more boy for me."

The men laughed.

"Well, wnat did you overhear?" asked Gibbs.

"Nothin'."

"Nothing? Wasn't they talking when you went in?"

"Oh! yas. Leastways the kid was. He was spoutin' Brakespeare, or w'otever his name was. But I didn't hear you chaps mentioned, ner nothin' private."

The men looked disgusted.

"You're a slouch," said Tom Smith, "and we won't hire you again. Here's your half-dollar—but wait a bit. Did they suspect you were spyin'?"

"No."

"Then why did you fight?"

"Wal, yer see, I tripped him, 'cause I thought he was fresh, but I found he was so 'tarnal salt that he jest put me in brine."

"Bah!" said "Captain" Mark, "this boy is no good. But, never mind. I'm sure that kid was after us, and under the table on purpose to hear what was said, but we'll fix him. I want both of you to meet me at 'Mother' Hickley's, on Locust street, at three o'clock."

Both Tom and Gibbs agreed to be there, and then they moved off.

Three o'clock!

"Captain" Mark, Gibbs and Smith were seated in a small, none-too-clean room, in company with an old woman, whose features were of a Jewish cast, while her face was avaricious, crafty and cruel.

She was one of that class of women to be seen in every large city, while honest people wonder why Mother Earth can tolerate such a burden.

"Yes, my tears," she was saying, with a nod and a bob of her vulture-like head, "I vill pring de leetle poy here. It vill please me vell to haf de leetle tear in my house—I do so love leetle poy. I vill pring him, an' den you can smother him with a billow, like Othello did Desdemona."

"But how'll you get him here?" asked Tom Smith.

"Neffor you mind, my tear, I vill do dot part all right."

"Trust 'Mother' Hickley for that," interrupted Gibbs. "Let us, rather, look to our own work. 'Captain' Mark, how does *your* job come on?"

"A1. I have sent a decoy telegram to the real Andrew Allan, whose ship has just reached New York, signing the message 'Mrs. Bradford.' That'll bring Allan here. In fact, I have

received a telegram from our ally in New York, stating that Allan leaves by an evening train, and I am going on to Trenton, meet Allan's train there, return on it, find Allan and drug him, and then we can get him to one of our safe places and do with him as we will."

"How the dickens are you going to drug him on the train?" asked Smith.

"Young man, when you've floated around the world as long as I have, you'll be up to more tricks than now. How? Well, we'll see. I have cigars which will make him who smokes them insensible; also, drugged wine and other things. Trust me for that. I'll rope in Allan all right, if 'Mother' Hickley can attend to that cursed Joe."

"My tear," said the old woman, "shust you let 'Mother' Hickley alone. She haf a petter head than any von off you, an' she vas a cut-tooth sharper afore you vas got out off your cradles."

This retort caused a laugh, and the conversation continued, covering more fully the points of "Captain" Mark's plot, but developing nothing new.

Tom Smith finally arose, stretched himself and walked to the window.

"Hallo!" he suddenly exclaimed.

"What is it?"

"Come here, Gibbs, and you, Mark. I'll be shot if here isn't that boy, just getting out of a cab, big as life. Yes, and he's got his eye on this house. Carefully! Keep a little back, or he'll see you."

"Yes, by the fiends!" said the "Captain," "that's Joe, and this proves our suspicions correct. He's on our track, sure, and the dickens is to pay."

"I know the driver, too," said Gibbs. "He's the same man who took the girl away from the depot. By George! the boy is onto the racket, red-hot!"

"Yes, he's not only got us down fine, but he's found out where we stop. He'll have the police after us, sure as fate."

"Neffor you mind, my tears," said "Mother" Hickley, bustling about. "The fat ain't in de fire yet. I told you I would haf dot poy, an' I'll do it. I'll gather him in like von lost sheep—de tear leetle lamb!"

"Can you do it sure?" eagerly asked Gibbs.

"My tear, ask me dot question six dimes more an' den geep your mouth closed. Ven I say I vill gather de tear leetle poy in, I mean shust vot I say!"

#### CHAPTER VI.

[BY CHARLES MORRIS.]

##### A POINT IN THE GAME.

AFTER leaving Johnny Flynn's saloon, Jubilee Joe returned to the railroad station at Thirty-second and Market streets, where for several hours he was busily engaged in an enterprise of no little importance. This was—a search for the cab that had carried Laura Murray away from the station, and which he knew bore his mark in the shape of a long nail-scratch.

But his search proved unsuccessful. The cab was not to be found.

Along toward the middle of the afternoon he went up to the exhibition grounds, for he knew that more vehicles were to be found there at that hour than at any other point in the city.

Outside the grounds things were almost as lively as inside the huge main building which lifted its lofty towers into the clear afternoon air. Shantytown was alive, with its shows and its "saloons," while the gateways of the exhibition were crowded with eager sight-seers, forcing their way in a steady stream through the turnstiles.

On the border of this busy scene stood Jubilee Joe, with his face of unwashed impudence, calmly surveying the excited throng, and perhaps debating with himself whether he could not find some way to get in on the strength of somebody else's half-dollar.

As he stood there looking on, and debating within himself what to do, a cab rolled rapidly up to the curb, stopped, and a gentleman stepped out. Joe looked at him. He had surely seen that personage somewhere before, though he could not at first remember where.

He was about to take a closer observation, when his eyes were arrested by something else, that set him in a state of the utmost surprise and delight.

From where he stood the rear of the cab was visible, and on it he had observed a long, ugly scratch. He recognized it in an instant as his own handiwork.

Jubilee sprang forward on the instant, quite forgetting the gentleman in his eagerness to question the driver.

"Say, Jakey, don't you want to make a two-

dollar bill this afternoon?" he demanded. "That's all I've got in bank, or I'd make it a three."

"I'm always on hand. What do you want? A drive?"

"I want to take in some p'int about a drive. 'Bout two o'clock this A. M. you druv' a young lady into town, from the Penny Railroad station. Guess you won't forgit *that*. There was a coon of a feller with her. I'm sent to hunt up that gal, and I'll guv' you a double-barreled bank-note if you'll say where you planted her."

"How do you know I took her?" asked the driver.

"'Cause I reckernize your cab. I never forgit a cab I've once seen."

"You recognize the scratch you made on it, you young rascal! You're the chap I whipped off on the bridge. You want me to tell you something, do you? Just hold on a bit and I'll try and accommodate you."

He snatched his whip and sprang to the ground in a rage.

Joe stood his ground. He had no idea of running away. The cabman angrily approached him.

"Hold up, there!"

It was the gentleman who had just landed from the cab. He had been looking at Joe with an inquiring glance.

"See here, boy," he demanded. "Didn't I see you yesterday in company with a Mr. Allan, in an insurance office at Fourth and Chestnut?"

"Got it, now!" cried Joe, slapping his knee. "Knowned I knowed you. You're the vice-president of that Co."

"Just so. Now, will you tell me a thing or two? Who is that Mr. Allan? Where did you meet him?"

"You don't quite freeze to him, then? You begin to think he's a beat?"

"I must confess I was too hasty in insuring his life. I begin to think he is a doubtful character. If you can put me on his track I'll make it worth your while."

"He's a dead beat, Mr. Vice-President, I kin tell you *that*. An' I'm the chap that's got him on a horn. You'll pay me if I fotch him up standing?"

"Indeed I will."

"Then make this galoot answer my question. Fur it's Andy Allan I'm arter, an' no mistake."

"Answer him, my man. I will pay you the money he offers."

"Tain't enough to mend that 'ar scratch," answered the cabman, sullenly.

"Then I'll make it enough. Now answer."

"Well, then, I drove first to a house on Locust street. There the pair got out. But they asked me to stop, and in five minutes they got in again, and ordered me to drive to Bainbridge street. There they got out again, and dismissed me."

"At Patsy O'Neill's saloon?"

"Yes. How do you know that?"

"Never mind how. Could you swear that th' pair that got on at Locust street was th' same as got in ag'in?"

"Of course they were. It was dark, though. I couldn't be *quite* sure."

"What was th' number of that Locust street house?"

"I don't know."

"Could you drive to it?"

"Yes."

"Then I want you to drive me there, double-quick. And, Mr. Vice-President, I want you to pay ther shot. 'Cause it's meat into *your* pot. Fork over, and pile me off, fur there's no time to lose."

"What are you after?"

"Tell you another time. Ef you're goin' to back me up in this, fork over."

The vice-president looked in Joe's face and saw that he meant business. Without a word more he handed the cabman a piece of money.

"Take him wherever he wants to go. Report to me, boy, at my office."

"Ay, ay!" said Joe. "When I git ready," he repeated to himself.

The next minute he was in the cab and driving rapidly toward the Girard-avenue bridge over the Schuylkill.

Jubilee Joe had taken many a ride on the tail-end of a carriage, but this was his first inside experience, and the young street Arab thoroughly enjoyed it as he lay back on the softly-cushioned seat.

"Talk 'bout yer hoss-flies! If this ain't gay and lively I don't know nothin' 'bout greens.—See here, Billy Butcher, wouldn't ye like to take a ride this nice day in my mince-pie barouche?"

The question was asked of one of his boot-



black companions, whom he saw on the side walk, and who stood gazing after him with as much surprise as if he had seen Aladdin's palace.

"Guess I slightly 'stonished Billy. Wait till I see him. Won't I fling him some whoppers? Tell him my uncle in Chiny has pegged out, and left me his pile."

The cab rattled on through the streets, and drew up at length, after nearly an hour's journey.

"This is the house," said the cabman, opening the door of the carriage. "I know it now like a breeze."

Joe jumped out, and stretched his legs on the pavement.

The street they were in was built up with medium-sized houses. The one to which the cabman pointed was a three-storied brick, with a side alley on one side. It joined another house on the other.

"Sure?" asked Joe, taking a quick survey of the neighborhood.

"No mistake about it. They went into this house. They came out again inside of five minutes and told me to drive on."

"Then you druv' to Patsy O'Neill's, on Bainbridge street?"

"That's it, to a hair."

"That'll do. Guess I'm 'bout done with you, 'cept one thing."

"What's that?"

"I want my divvy."

"Your what?"

"You ain't wantin' to say you don't understand English? See here, old chap, who got you this job? S'pose I go 'round pickin' up customers fur cabbies 'thout gettin' paid fur it? Not much!"

The cabman looked at him and laughed.

"You had your ride."

"What's that your biz? Fork over fifty cents. I've got to make a Centennial trip out of this job."

The cabman had been well paid, and rather liked the boy's impudence. He handed him a half-dollar with a laugh.

"Anything else?"

"Guess that's 'bout all. Guv' you my patronage in ther future. Now you kin vamose."

The boy continued to gaze at the house after the cabman had driven off. He scratched his head doubtfully.

"Ther gal's in there. Leastways that's my notion. I'm goin' ter 'vestigate that there calaboose. I've got ter go through that noble mansion somehow. Fust thing's ter git my twincklers on ther gal. Next thing's ter warp her out. Then I've got ter countermin' them there conspiratters, an' bleed that vice-president. He's got ter fork over lively, you bet, 'fore I empty my bag o' news inter his 'fater-paw. I'm on ther war-path fur cash, I am; not fur glory. An' I ain't goin' ter sell out fur auction prices."

While he stood gazing at the house a dwarfish negro came shuffling along down the street, turned into the alley, and then into the house.

"Hullo! wonder if *that* coon lives there?" Jubilee thought. "Say, I wonder if I couldn't pass for him? He's 'bout my size, an' I'll bet I know where to get a wig an' face-black to fix up jest like him. I'll think this here idee over, an' see how it fits."

Debating with himself for a while, he finally started off at a quick pace toward Bainbridge street. The idea had come to him to investigate Patsy O'Neill's saloon, and if possible get his eye on the "Captain's" daughter.

He wanted to see what sort of looking girl this was who was undertaking the perilous task of personating Laura Murray, the unfortunate girl whom he believed to be held prisoner in the Locust-street den.

Reaching the desired locality, Joe marched boldly into Patsy O'Neill's saloon. He had no plan of action laid out, but he trusted to chance to help him, and he wanted badly to see the inside of that shanty.

It was a low-down rum-mill, with the proprietor, a bloated-faced Irishman behind the bar, and two or three beats in front. Patsy looked up angrily at Joe, as he swaggered in, as independent as a lord.

"What does yez want, b'hoi? Git out wid yez now. We don't sell to rats."

"Feard ye'd p'ison 'em?" asked Joe, impudently. "S'pose your whisky kills at ten paces, don't it?"

"Ye little spalpeen! Is it to insult me ye're arter? Away wid yez now, or I'll t'ache ye a lesson ye'll not soon forgit!"

He bustled around outside the bar, his face redder than ever with anger.

Joe stood his ground bravely.

"I've got a letter fur ther 'Captin'," he said, feeling in his pockets. "Ye'll take *that* in, I s'pose, 'fore ye kick me inter ther street?"

Patsy halted and looked at the boy.

"A letter fer 'Cap' Mark?" he demanded. "Who is it from? Pass it over, and git."

"Pass it over? What sort of a donkey do you take me fur? I wasn't weaned on skim-milk, old hoss, nary time. I've got orders ter guv' it to ther 'Captin' hisself, or to his darter. It's a important dokymnt, now, I tell ye."

Patsy continued to glare on him, as if in doubt whether he had not better kick him out and be done with it. He finally thought better of it, opened the house door, and walked in. Joe heard him calling somebody inside. He returned after a minute.

"Ye'll find her in there," he said, pointing backward with his thumb. "Take her the letter, and then make yerself scarce. D'yez hear? Don't 'low no bootblacks to loaf round my place."

Overjoyed with his success, Joe hastened into the room pointed out, and shut the door behind him. What to do next he knew not; but he trusted to his impudence, and his talent for squeezing through a narrow hole.

He was still feeling eagerly in his pockets, in a desperate effort to find the imaginary letter.

"Drat it all," he muttered. "I wonder if Billy Butcher went through me. If he did I'll bounce his go-cart."

"You haven't lost the letter?"

He looked up. Before him stood a girl of about the size of Laura Murray, and not unlike her in face, though with a very different expression. Joe was an old bird at making out faces, and he made up his mind about this one at sight.

"That gal knows beans," he said to himself. "She's been through the mill. Ain't no innercent flukes 'bout her. But she's gettin' herself up ter play respectable."

The girl in fact was stylishly dressed, but wore an overabundance of jewelry.

Her face was a very handsome one, but it was a bold beauty that told its lesson to Joe's quick eyes.

"Well, where's the letter? Don't stand there all day like an ape."

"Can't find it," admitted Joe. "Had a bit of a tug with one o' ther boys comin' down yere, and I guess he went through me. Jist wait. I'll go back and salt his porridge. He's got to fork over or he'll git his b'iler bad bu'st."

"Who sent you with the letter?"

"I don't know ther chap. But I tell you he was handsome as a picter. Met him at ther Continental, where I ginerally put up. He guv' me ther letter, and a half-dollar fur bringin' it. I was ter guv' it to nobody but Miss Sally Mark, down at Patsy O'Neill's."

The girl was evidently deeply interested in this story, which Joe so glibly invented.

"Why, you said out there it was for the 'Captain'."

"That was all a blind," answered Joe, with a wink. "Wasn't goin' to let out afore them coons that a handsome gent was sendin' *you* letters."

"Good for you, my boy! But you've lost it, you young rascal!"

"I kin git it ag'in. I'll guv' Billy my half-dollar fur it, if I can't lick it out o' him."

"I'll give you a dollar if you bring it here before night."

"You'll see me, if it's in ther wood."

"See here, my boy; if you don't get it till tomorrow you won't find me here. By the way, what sort of looking man was it that made you his messenger?"

"A prime 'un, you bet! Dressed as gay as a duke. Had long, black hair, and ther purtiest curled moustache you ever see'd. He was a tall, slimish chap, an' looked as if he'd eat nothin' but pound-cake all his life. Where am I to come then, to-morrer?"

The girl was evidently interested and excited by this description. She hesitated a moment, and then answered in a low voice:

"Come to — Spruce street. It is a Mrs. Bradford lives there. I am going there on a visit to a friend of mine. You ask for my friend and I will come down. Don't give the letter to anybody else."

"All O. K.," answered Joe. "What is your friend's name?"

"Miss Laura Murray."

"Then, good-by. I'm goin' fur Billy."

He had to get out of the house, or something would have burst inside him.

The game was playing into his hands so neatly that it was as much as he could do to contain himself.

"I'm to ax fur Laura Murray, an' *you'll* come down," he said to himself, on reaching the street. "It kinder strikes me as you *have* 'come down' mighty lively. I knowed that handsome moustache 'd fotch her. 'Tain't many gals kin stand *that*. Lawsee, *hasn't* it panned out lovely! So she's goin' ter plant herself on Mrs. Bradford as Laura Murray! Hand-bag, papers an' all! It's a mighty sweet game as it stands, but Jubilee Joe holds a trump hand in it. Now, ther next thing's ter interview ther *real* Laura Murray, if it's in ther wood. She's got to come outer that Locust-street den somehow, if I have ter snatch her off ther roof, an' take her up in a balloon."

He walked along the street, busily cogitating what to do next.

Little did he think that a spy was on his track.

## CHAPTER VII.

[BY FRANK DUMONT.]

### IN THE TRAP.

JUBILEE JOE turned out of Bainbridge street and rapidly passed through a narrow alley in order to reach South street.

He slunk into this narrow alley to avoid pursuit, for several of Patsy O'Neill's loungers came to the doorway of the rum-mill and gazed after him as he passed out.

He was not quite sure that his visit had disarmed suspicion, and he took this precaution to leave the vicinity of O'Neill's mill as rapidly as possible.

Crossing South street he plunged into Gillis's alley, and then passed through Lisbon street to Sixth.

This part of the city is given up entirely to the poorer classes, and the tumble-down rookeries shelter both the deserving poor and the skulking criminal.

It is at night, however, when the slums of the great city become dangerous, and the inmates, like huge spiders, await the approach of the "fly."

Jubilee Joe passed along, fairly stepping over swarms of children, white and black, and dodging energetic Hebrews who fought to secure his custom in the second-hand clothing line.

It was while gazing into the windows of a little shop filled with *bric-à-brac* of old hats, boots, carpenter's tools, clocks, and a thousand other articles of little value, that he formed a faint outline of his next move.

It was to loiter around until dark, and then boldly enter the Locust street den and look for the true Laura Murray.

"Mother" Hickley was known to him as a vi-rago who was feared by the dangerous classes, and who was the reputed "fence" of Philadelphia burglars.

It would be no easy matter to enter her den and have an interview with Laura Murray. Thus thought Joe, as he gazed into the Jew's window.

"I'll do it!" he said aloud.

"Dot's right, my tear," cried a little squeaking voice at his side; "I know just vot you vill do. I can read it in your eyes. You want to steal dot burglar's tools in de vindow!"

Joe turned and almost cried aloud with mingled joy and surprise. A little, hook-nosed woman with a pair of glittering eyes stood beside him, and he recognized the features at once.

"Mother Hickley!" he gasped.

"Yes, my tear. Everybody calls me their mother, because I *am* a good mother to those I like. Ah! many a good little poy has become rich and famous because I was a good mother to him!"

Jubilee was perfectly dazed, and for the moment speechless. The very woman he was thinking of outwitting now stood beside him, as if conjured up from the very pavement under his feet!

This was a rare piece of good luck, and the cool boy regained his wits rapidly.

"You was thinking of stealing dem tools, eh? You want to go in pizness for yourself, eh? You're a smart-looking poy. You've got an eye in your head like an eagle. You was cunning as a snake. Ah! I can read talent and smartness in a poy, and I always likes to help 'em along—help 'em along in pizness."

Joe saw through the old hag's meaning. She evidently thought he was admiring the iron tools in the window, and his exclamation "I'll do it!" had aroused the old wretch's desire to gain another boy criminal to the number in her employ.

"Never mind dose tools," she piped; "I've got some good vuns at home. Fine steel and improved vork."



"How am I goin' ter git them? I haven't got a cent! If steamboats were sellin' for a cent apiece, I couldn't buy a gang-plank."

"I'll trust you. You look honest. You're an honest poy. At least you vill be honest to me. I've got a grown-up son—not my own son, you know, put an adopted son—and he vill take you in hand and make an artist of you."

"Oh! That's just what I'd like!" averred Joe, apparently well pleased. "I want to be a good one—I don't want to be no slouch! I've had a good deal of practice, an' if I git a good teacher I'll bet I'll give ther cops some trouble before they ever nip me."

"Vell, I can't stand here talking to you any longer. Come to my house to-night, and I'll see vat can be done for you. I live on Locust street near Sixth—"

"I know where it is," declared Jubilee. "I've heard tell of you an' your home by a feller that shared ther same cell with me in Moyamensing. Oh! he was a fly coon, but they nabbed him at last. He used to tell me all about you an' your home, an' how good you were to ther gang."

Of course Joe was telling a "whopper," but, acting on the maxim that "all's fair in love or war," he proceeded to tell about his burglarious exploits, and the imaginary thieves who had spoken in such glowing terms of their "mother" on Locust street.

The shrewd old hag seemed well pleased at this flattery, and Joe piled it on thick when he found she liked it.

He promised to call that night, and the old wretch shuffled away in the direction of her den.

Jubilee was secretly congratulating himself over this rare piece of good luck, when a new suspicion dawned upon him.

"Mother" Hickley bore the reputation of being the sharpest criminal in the city, and yet she had been hoodwinked, to a certain degree, by him.

Was she merely pretending? or did she really believe his yarns? Was she seeking to lure him to the Locust-street house? Had she been on his track, and spoken to him purposely to draw him into that den? He asked himself a number of such questions, but failed to find a satisfactory answer.

"I'm goin' in there, though, if I come out of it deader than a salt mackerel!"

That was Joe's final reply to all his mental questions. He had wished for a chance to enter the den, and the way was now clear for him to do so. The way out was very doubtful; but Joe had decided to go, and that settled everything.

"Now," he said to himself, as he sauntered leisurely around, "I'll fool 'round down here this evenin', an' see ef I can't find my friend, ther Opera House man. I'll let him think I'm s'prised ter see him; but I'm bound ter have a nigger disguise ef it takes my scalp-lock."

It was near dusk when Joe reached Chestnut street. He walked toward Tenth, and for a moment lingered in front of the telegraph office.

He scarcely knew what to do, in order to kill time, while awaiting the coming of night. His box had been loaned to a fellow artist, and for the present he was out of employment, and actually feeling lonesome and impatient.

"Hello, Jubilee!"

Joe turned and joyfully greeted the newcomer—the very man he wanted to meet.

"Hello, Magill! Where are you going?—'round to ther Opera House?"

"Yes, I've got to start in on some new work—new piece going on next Monday night, and I'm busy as a bee."

Magill was the property-man of Carnecross's Opera House, and one of Joe's most valued friends. Often he would find a chance to smuggle Joe into the Opera House, either into a balcony seat, or behind the scenes in the capacity of an assistant *pro tem*.

Jubilee Joe was well known to the members of the company as "the boothblack," and was liberally patronized by them whenever he solicited trade.

The coming of Magill quite pleased Joe, and he accompanied the property-man around to the little Opera House at once, and assisted him in the routine of his duties.

"I've got to burn some corks, Joe. Do you want to help?"

"Cert!"

In a few moments the corks were being charred, and Joe viewed the process of making the thickened black paste for the minstrels to "black up" with that evening.

He filled the little tin boxes for his friend, and under his directions deposited one in each dressing-room.

It was while thus engaged that he slipped a small box of the face-black into his pocket.

Half his object was accomplished.

He next "amused" himself by trying on the different comical wigs.

"Don't touch *that* wig, on the shelf," said Magill, pointing to one near the mirror. "That belongs to Lew Dockstader, and he's mighty particular about 'em."

"Well, I ain't goin' ter eat it—am I?"

"I know you ain't going to eat it but don't touch it."

"Whose wig is this?"

"That belongs to me."

"You don't act, do you?"

"Yes, once in a while I have to go on."

"What do you do? play ther hind legs of a mule?"

"Now, look here, Joe; don't begin any of your funny business on me. I ain't a hind-legs-of-a-mule actor, and you don't want to get fresh around this place, for we keep a trough full of brine here."

"Well, you'd ought ter go an' bathe in it, Magill."

Joe dodged a stuffed ham and ran down-stairs, laughing, to escape the irate property-man.

"Say, Joe! come back! I want you!" cried Magill from the window overlooking the alley.

"Not *this* evenin'!—some *other* evenin'!—good eve!" shouted the gamin, as he gayly passed out of Theater alley.

The mischievous imp had secured Magill's wig, and had it hidden in one of his capacious pockets.

He had a faint idea that he might need the disguise in the nocturnal adventures about to ensue.

The street lamps were being lighted as Joe wandered about, anxiously waiting a later hour.

He consumed several hours in the neighborhood of the den on Locust street, carefully noting the surroundings. He glided up the alley and scrutinized the back part of the house, but every window-shutter was closed, and the house itself appeared deserted.

At last he sought the front door, and placing his hand on the knob, turned it. The door was open.

He passed into the back corridor, wondering at the carelessness "Mother" Hickley evinced in the semi-open door, when—*clash!*

The door slammed shut with a bang, and he heard the click of a spring-lock.

The front door had suddenly closed, leaving Joe in the dark hallway.

"Dis vay, my tear! I left de door open for you on purpose!" said the squeaky voice of the hag. "I guess de vind vas vat shut it so quick after you came in."

The voice came from the gloom beyond, and as there was no alternative Joe had to proceed toward its owner.

He was fairly in the trap.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

[BY FRANK DUMONT.]

#### FOILED.

A SINGLE ray of light shot out from a door as it was partially opened, and the shadow of the old hag danced on the opposite wall.

A moment later her ugly features became visible, and as she shaded the lamp with her hand the dull glare fell upon her shriveled face, and her eyes gleamed like those of a cat in the dark.

"This vay, sonny," she repeated.

And the boy followed her shuffling figure into the dingy apartment.

It was a small room, scantily furnished, and the only light was that given by the lamp borne by the hag.

"You kept your promise and came, didn't you?" she squeaked. "Dot's a good little poy! Always pe prompt in pizness, and you vill succeed."

Joe did not reply, but sat down and took a hasty survey of this back apartment.

A round, black object lay in one corner of the room, which Joe at first supposed was a large Newfoundland dog.

The old hag approached this object and gave it several kicks with her thick shoes, and as it unfolded itself into a sitting-posture, Joe beheld a dwarfish negro of about his own height.

Jubilee recognized him at once as the fellow he had seen enter the house that afternoon. The negro yawned, and gradually awoke.

"Wake up! Here is another poarder for our mansion!" said "Mother" Hickley, addressing the yawning darky.

"Yes'm; I sees him, 'm."

The darky told a deliberate falsehood, for he

had not yet rubbed the "sleep" out of his eyes, and did not know he was awake; much less could he see any one.

"This little poy is going to pe my new adopted son," said the hag, with a hidden significance in the words, "and I vant you to pe kind and attentive to him. Now take him up and show him his own nice little room, and then come pack to me for further instructions."

The darky armed himself with a lighted candle, and motioning to Joe to follow, ascended the rickety stairway.

Joe mechanically followed his sable guide, urged to do so by "Mother" Hickley's words of assurance. The hag stood at the foot of the stairs and waited until Joe had reached the third story.

The negro paused before a low doorway, and thrusting a key into the lock gave it a turn and flung open the door.

Placing the light on the table, he allowed Joe to view the apartment. Then suddenly taking the light up, he stepped back to the door, shut it and turned the key in the lock. Joe was secured in the room, and he heard the retreating footsteps of the negro as he descended the stairs.

Once he imagined he heard the shrill laugh of the old crone, but he listened in vain for a repetition of the sound. A dread silence reigned. Jubilee Joe was fairly entrapped, without a struggle. He had blindly stumbled into the old fly's "parlor."

"Well, I deserve to git inter a mess of this kind," Joe thought. "No one but a chuckle-head would have acted like I did! Like a gawk, I have come here to take chances without telling somebody where I was going! But nobody will care about me anyhow, so what's ther difference?"

"What kind of a ranch am I inter, anyway? I kin feel ther ceiling. I am right under ther roof. Front part of ther house. All ther shutters closed, too. Wonder if there's a back room? Let's reek-an-oyster."

Joe began a sort of exploring-in-the-dark movement, and his hands soon came in contact with a door leading to a rear apartment. He tried the door-knob. The door was locked.

His fingers wandered a trifle lower, and he felt a key protruding from the lock.

A quick turn, and the door yielded to his pressure, and he passed into an adjoining apartment.

"Who is there?" asked a low, sweet voice.

The words thrilled him, and he started back surprised.

He had found Laura Murray a captive like himself! It was a strange meeting in the dark.

"Sh!" whispered Joe. "Don't speak 'loud! I am a friend. I am a prisoner here like yourself. I came here fer ther purpose of settin' you free, but they nipped me. My name is Jubilee Joe—'Sh! I've got a match in my pocket, an' I'll light it. That will give you a chance to see who I am. Only one match, miss, so look sharp!"

He struck the match, and in that momentary flash and feeble light both captives gazed at each other, and then gloom prevailed once more.

"Now, miss, don't be afraid ter trust me. I've risked my life to enter this den. You are to be kept here, an' another girl is goin' to pass herself off as Laura Murray."

"This is all I kin tell you at present. We've both got to git out of this, an' I'm goin' ter take you with me."

He felt her hand grasp his, and a quivering voice whispered:

"God bless you, Joe. Don't leave me here if you can possibly save me."

"Hark!" said Joe; "I hear some one comin' up-stairs. Hear th' creakin' sound? We must not be found together. They must not dream that I know where this room is. I'll go back ter my own, an' lay low fer ducks!"

Joe glided back into his own gloomy apartment, quietly closed the intervening door and locked it, placing the key in his pocket.

He heard footsteps in the room directly underneath, and in a moment a very feeble light showed itself through a knot-hole in the floor.

He bent down and applied his eye to the small orifice, and obtained a view of the room below, and its occupants.

The first person he saw was the shambling form of "Mother" Hickley, and the next was Tom Smith, the villain now masquerading as Andrew Allan.

Joe saw it all now, and easily divined the reason why he was under lock and key.

If he had any further doubts, they were quickly dispelled by the following conversation:

"Did you succeed in getting the kid out of the way?"

"Yes," answered the hag, "I got him just as



easy as catching a hungry fish with fat bait. He just jumped at the bait and I landed him. He's up-stairs, locked up!"

"Good! I could take my oath that the kid was playing 'possum under the table when I had that interview with Mark. I'll bet he heard every word we said."

"Vot good vill it do him? He'll never get out of dis place alive," chuckled the hag.

Joe felt that he was in a tight place, and he said so to himself as he lay there listening attentively to every word uttered by the twain.

"All right. I leave him to your tender mercy, mother," responded Smith. "Don't let him get away from you. He's a shrewd little fox, and he knows too much."

"He's a stupid plockhead! else I couldn't have scooped him in so easy, my tear," assured "Mother" Hickley, triumphantly.

Joe thought so, too; he fully coincided with the hag.

"She's correct. I am a blockhead—but I ain't dead yet, by a long shot!"

"The girl is all right, isn't she, mother?"

"Just like a daisy! I've got her as safe as if she was in the State Prison! You know petter than to ask me such a foolish question. Who ever gets out of 'Mother' Hickley's hands—eh?"

"That's so, that's so," mused Smith. "No one escapes your clutches; I can vouch for that! But now, concerning this boy: It is necessary that he never sees daylight until our plan is perfected in every respect."

"He'll never see daylight, anyvay!" said the old beldame. "I ton't take chances, my tear—not I! V'at's vun pootplack more or less in this great city? Oh no! his case is settled!"

"That's what I call very kind!" ejaculated the listening gamin. "I'm a gone coon! I'm dead an' buried, an' I don't know it!"

The voices sunk to a whisper, and the light was extinguished.

He heard the sound of footsteps descending the stairs, then all was silent again. The conference had come to an end, and as far as he was concerned, it was settled that he was to be removed without ceremony.

Not a moment was to be lost, and he therefore decided to communicate with the fair captive again.

He opened the door, and in a hushed voice told her all that he had overheard, and then began a search for an outlet to the roof.

While thus occupied he heard a slight noise in the hallway, as if some one had leaned against the wooden partition. In a few moments the sound was repeated.

Some one was listening, and had probably overheard his conversation with Laura!

Jubilee decided instantly to return to his room, and had barely reached it when he became aware that some one had cautiously opened his door and entered.

The footfalls, although as light and soft as a cat's when sneaking upon its prey, was heard by Joe's sharp ears, and he crouched down and waited for the spring of the unknown assassin.

Nor had he long to wait, for the unknown seemed to locate him in the gloom, and pounced forward to seize him.

But Joe was prepared, and by a quick movement darted aside, allowing his assassin to fling his head against the brick wall when he fell partially stunned to the floor.

In a moment Joe was upon the prostrate form and his hand came in contact with an object carried in the grasp of the fallen intruder.

It was a deadly object called a "black jack"—or slung-shot. A ball of lead secured by leather thongs—a most dangerous missile for close quarters.

Joe seized the missile and dealt several blows at random upon the reviving assassin. The blows were effective, for the wretch sunk down and became limp and apparently lifeless.

A hasty search revealed another match in Joe's pocket, and he quickly ignited it and gazed at his would-be slayer. It was the negro who had guided him to the room!

"Have you fixed him?" cried a shrill voice from below.

"Yes, ma'am!" responded Joe, in a subdued voice, as he ran to the doorway and replied to the hag's query.

"Then come town-stairs at vonce!"

Here was an incident totally unlooked-for, but Joe was equal to the emergency.

The burnt cork in his pocket was produced in a moment, and a rapid metamorphosis ensued. His features were quickly blackened, and the "borrowed" wig hastily pulled down over his own hair.

"Now I'm ready," he whispered.

Then going toward Laura's door he had just

time to tell her that he was seeking an escape for her by impersonating the negro, and that he would soon return to her, when "Mother" Hickley's sharp command to come down-stairs at once admonished him to obey her, in order to disarm her suspicions.

Slowly he descended the creaking stairs and saw the hag waiting his coming.

The flickering lamp was in her trembling hand.

He finally reached the last step and stood in her presence.

"Did you fix him—sure?" said the hag, half in anger and half-pleasantly.

Before he could reply he received a stunning blow from behind, and as his senses left him he saw the evil face of Tom Smith bending over him.

"A very good scheme, but it won't work, my boy!" snarled the man, and he raised Joe's limp form in his arms.

He bore the senseless figure into the yard, and the hag's lamp served to show him a spot indicated by her bony finger.

Smith removed a mass of rubbish, and discovered an abandoned well-hole.

He cast the body of Centennial Joe into the well, and quickly covered up the orifice with the rubbish.

## CHAPTER IX

[BY CAPTAIN MARK WILTON.]

### A GHOST'S EVENING OUT.

JUBILEE JOE'S first sensations after receiving the blow from Smith's heavy hand, was of being very wet, of having treacherous footing beneath him, and of being in a decidedly dazed condition as a whole.

Some wet substance had found its way into his mouth, and he blew it out with vigor.

"Julius K. Caesar! what sort o' blamed diffikilty have I got inter now? I'm th' unluckiest outang-orang fur scrapes that I ever knowed. Billy Butcher says a man that's borned to be hanged can't be drowned, or by the Centennial rooster! I'd think I was gittin' ther Atlantic nation inter my inner man, for sure. What've I swallered, anyhow? 'Tain't thin enough for water, nor thick enough for pound-cake; and I'll be jammed by a pile-driver ef it tastes good enough ter be Charlotte Russian!"

By this time he had felt about somewhat, and he announced the result in a low tone for his private information.

"Pitch-dark all 'round; no top over me 'cepting vacancy; up ter my waist in mud; solid bottom 'bout seven hundred feet b'low th' substratum o' th' 'arth—kin jest feel it. W'ot's all these stuns 'round me? Feels like a sewer. I'll bet a broken T. D. pipe I'm in a well; feels like it, anyhow. It may be so, but 'tain't well, by a mighty long-eared sight. Nixy, Jubilee; you've been knocked horizontal an' buried by old 'Mother' Hickley-hackley Hickley. Wish I had 'bout twenty thousand insurance on my valuable corporal corporation, like Andy Allan has. Now ter elevate my statoo ter terrible firma!"

Which, being interpreted, meant that Joe intended to climb out of the well. He tried it and failed. The well was wide, the sides were smooth, and he might as well have tried to climb a rain-bow.

It had become clear to him that he had been flung into the place, after being knocked senseless, for no other purpose than to kill him, but his enemies had made at least one blunder.

They had not bound him, and he was left free so far as movement in the well was concerned. His fall had been broken by the mud at the bottom of the pit, so it had served one good purpose if it was uncomfortable to stand in.

He began to think earnestly. He could see no sky above him, from which he correctly argued that the well had been covered over. Then, from whence came the air he breathed? It was impure, but there was enough of it to keep life within him.

"Stands to reason thar is some sort o' a hole, avenoo or bellus which s'plies th' needful," he muttered, "an' I'm goin' to find it. I have a dim, fever-haunted idee that thar is a sullen som'ers 'round here. I kin smell onions. My nose is sharper arter onions than a Centennial landlord is arter rent."

He forgot landlords and noses as his searching fingers found a hole in the side of the well. Being close to the water's edge, it had before escaped his notice.

"Most big enough for me to crawl inter, an'—yes: here's a loose stone, sure's my name is Jubilee."

He pulled it away, and found an opening of considerable size beyond it. He resolved to ex-

plore it. The longer he stayed in the well the less he liked it, and he raised himself and crept into the passage beyond.

"Quite cheerin'," he soliloquized. "Ther funder I go, ther more I git th' delicate odor o' onions. I think I'm on ther scent!"

He advanced for twenty feet. In some places the passage was so low that he had to creep, while, further on, it became as high as his head, only to descend again, and was in all places curiously mixed with half-decayed timbers and boards.

From this fact he reasoned that he was among the ruins of an old house, the cellar of which had been hastily and imperfectly filled.

The passage ended abruptly in vacancy, and when he had investigated he decided that he had reached another cellar, this time one which was in use.

"I'm goin' in," he said. "If th' sullen is holler, which same it 'pears to be, I shall stan' more show o' bein' reserrectionized. Here goes!"

He had swung himself down, and his feet touched the cellar bottom. He breathed a sigh of relief and bade a long adieu to the passage.

He moved about, but nearly fell over various tubs and boxes, and it was a welcome sight when he saw a ray of light above, and evidently at the head of a stairway.

Nothing could dampen his high spirits, but he very much preferred the outer world to skir-mishing around in such places as had of late been his quarters.

"I'll go up an' make myself knowed, like a Prodigal Son—but, hold on; it might be th' means o' gittin' myself slain like a prodigal calf. Who knows whar I be? This ain't ther Continental Hotel, nur Independence Hall, nur no other fash'nable head-center. I've been in diffikilties enough for one leather-polisher—I'll go fast mighty slow now."

Acting on this wise idea, he crept up-stairs with the caution of a cat. He found that the light shone under a door as he suspected, and the sound of voices reached his ears from beyond.

What was said was not distinguishable, however, so he cautiously pushed the door a little ajar.

He closed it again with dangerous quickness, and his dirt-begrimed face grew the picture of astonishment.

He had seen "Mother" Hickley, Tom Smith, alias Andrew Allan, and the negro.

He was back in the house of the female "fence!"

It was a discovery which would have alarmed any one less gifted with coolness than Jubilee Joe, but it merely created surprise in his mind.

"If 'tain't them, I'll eat red flannel hash an' run th' risk o' p'ison! They throwed me out, an' I've got in ag'in unbenownst ter any o' th' angelical cherubims an' cherubusters. Hello! w'ot's that they sez?"

"It's no use to vork over him von pit," said "Mother" Hickley. "His skull is cracked like von aig-shell, my tear."

"Shall I get a doctor?" asked Smith.

"Get a toctor? Vat you are talking about? You suppose I let a toctor come here? Vere you see signs that I vas crazy—say?"

"But it seems too bad to let even such a fellow die without medical aid."

The old woman laughed.

"Aid to die, you mean? Vell, v'ot if he toes tie? Ve put him aped, and he come out and fell down-stairs, didn't he? V'ot ve do mit all that?"

"Just as you say," indifferently replied Smith. "Well, I'm off. We can now all breathe freely, since that hound of a bootblack is done for. Gibbs will see you soon, and give further directions. Hang on to the girl."

"V'y not put her out of the vay forever?" asked the woman, her eyes twinkling evilly.

"Ask Gibbs. This is his part of the game. Good-night!"

Tom sauntered out, and then the woman shook her bony fist after him.

"Go your vay, my fine laddie, put ton't carry your head above your shoulders too high. I vork for those who pay the pest, and if you fail to give me my due, there may be von too many in this game."

"That's me," muttered Joe, from the cellar stairs. "I'm one too many fer my good or theirs, an' I'll be b'iled red as a Cape Cod lobster if I know which. Howsumnever, it is ther verdict o' ther crowner's jury, given in august session—or July, I forgit which—that a feller about my size must be makin' hisself skeerce here right lively. I'll make a bolt fer it."

The woman had turned and was bending over the heavily-breathing negro, and Joe's way seemed clear, but the spirit of mischief seized



him and he resolved to have a little fun at her expense.

She was no lily-handed aristocrat, and proof of the fact existed in the shape of a quantity of ironed clothing which hung at one side.

The sight of these suggested to Joe the idea of playing ghost.

Cautiously he again opened the door, and this time he passed through and crept like a cat to the clothes. He expected "Mother" Hickley would hear him, but she did not.

He selected a sheet, and soon had himself properly inside of it. Possibly he then looked like a veritable ghost, but as he had no model, he was by no means sure.

All was ready, and he coughed in what he meant for a ghostly way. The old woman turned, and then looked at him in silence.

She was surprised, but did not seem alarmed. "Woman," quoth Jubilee Joe, in a tone intended to be sepulchral, "behold a ginervine, first-class, full-proof spirit from t'other spear. I'm a ghost, an' this here is my evenin' out. I'm ther spook o' George Washington Hamlet, condemned fur a while ter go a-cipherin' round this yere 'arth an' see that ther Centennial is run on strictly business principles—"

So far, and no further.

"You look here," said "Mother" Hickley, not at all alarmed, "you can't come in here mit me all trunk and play the fool von time. I'll teach you to steal my sheet v'ot I vash clean!"

And she made a rush at him, so sudden and fierce that he had no time to dodge out of the door, and was obliged to take refuge behind the table instead.

It was only a temporary relief; the old woman was on the war-path, and she darted after him with an agility not to be expected.

"I'll preak your pones in your pody, you pig trunkard!" she declared.

"Come on an' do it. I'm a ghost, an' I can't fight, but I kin run like a goat, and we'll see who shakes their hoofs first. Come an' see me! I ain't at home, but I'm ez sociable ez a settin' hen, an' nobody kin say I'm mean. Wake up, ole lady; sling your patent-leather pumps a little sprier!"

It was a generous invitation, but "Mother" Hickley was losing her breath and gaining nothing. 'Round and 'round the table they went, and they might have gone until now, possibly, had not Joe caught his foot in the sheet and tripped.

Down he went, and in a moment more the old woman tripped over him, turned like a hoop and brought up several feet away.

The boy was on his feet in a second.

"Hello, Sophia Jane! Spilled yerself, didn't ye? Ought ter j'ine ther Spitzbergarian grand-an'-lofty tumbler, b'mighty. Wal, so long; can't be hangin' round here fur even sech pretty gals as I now hev in my eyes. Hello!"

Joe had cast aside his sheet and started for the door, but as he did so it opened and a man entered.

The boy started back. The new-comer was Gibbs, and Joe foresaw trouble in the near future. Gibbs paused. He believed he recognized Joe, and a flush of dangerous enmity came to his face.

There was danger, and the boy knew that he had got to act quickly.

He gave one yell and rushed for Gibbs with lowered head. He had but a few feet to go, and Gibbs was there when he arrived. It somehow happened that the two collided, and then the man went over like a ten-pin, while Jubilee shot through the open door.

"So long, Gibbsy! Call at my office ter-morrer, an' you kin have part o' my chawin'-gum. Bring yer own teeth with ye!"

He was in retreat all the while he was speaking, and his movements were accelerated by the pursuit of both Gibbs and "Mother" Hickley, but once on the street he had no further fear.

The wretched old house and its occupants had too many secrets to hide, for the people to court scrutiny on the open streets.

"Reckon as how I'll git out o' this while I kin. Would like to hear ther confab between them two, but it stands to reason that arter what's happened they ain't got enough arsenic-green in their eyes to let me git onter their secrets. I'll go where ther air's purer an' dry off some o' th' mud I took in from ther well."

He walked on, thinking what he could do to help Laura Murray, and the question seemed settled when he met a policeman. To him he tried to tell his story, but the officer cut him short.

"Now, this won't do. Oi've heard jist such sthories before, an' divil a wan av thim pans out truth. Ye're loike all boys; too shmart fur

yer jacket ter hould in. Move on, or Oi'll be after yez wid dhis stick!"

And Jubilee moved on.

"It's right odd what a spite them one-hoss coppers has ag'in' me. I'd jest like ter know who hires an' pays 'em. Is it Bismarck, Gladstone, Parnell and Schovelmynoseoff, or is it Uncle Sam's free-born republican dimocrats? Seein' how it's Centennial year, seems ter me ther coppers should take their massive minds dway from foreign lands an' give a little show ter American talent. Hello, you!"

A man staggered around a corner and nearly collided with Joe.

"I ain't a lamp-post," added the boy. "Go an' hang up there till ther tansy-juice mixes with ther open air. Legs are weak, ain't they? You need stiffenin'. Go an' buy ten pounds o' starch an' brace up."

"Do you mean that I'm drunk?" fiercely demanded the man.

"You act jest ez I do when I'm drunk," replied Joe, good-humoredly, but the man stopped further remarks by springing forward and catching the boy by the throat.

"I'll choke the life out of you, you young hound!" he exclaimed.

## CHAPTER X.

[BY J. C. COWDRICK.]

GIBBS AT "MOTHER" HICKLEY'S.

"A FINE mess you've made of it, you old beldam!" cried Gibbs, with blood in his eye as he gazed after the retreating form of Jubilee Joe. "Our fat is in the fire now, sure. I thought you agreed to 'do' for that young spy!"

"Mother" Hickley was cringing in the most abject manner.

She evidently feared this man.

"V'y, my tear son," she whined, "I ton't know v'at you means."

"Come back into the room and I'll tell you in mighty few words what I mean," the irate Gibbs retorted, as he slammed the front door shut with a bang and strode back down the hall.

"Mother" Hickley shuffled along behind him. When they entered the room and she had closed the door, Gibbs exclaimed:

"So, you 'ton't know v'at I means,' eh? I'll tell you, then. I mean to cut your throat for allowing that boy to escape! Do you catch on to that?"

"He! he! he! ho! ho!" the old hag laughed. "Do you tink dot vas der poy? Vell, dot vas von good choke! He! he! he! V'y, my son, dot poy vas at de pottom of de old vell, right away dis very minute!"

She essayed to joke, but it was plain to be seen that she was frightened. Proof of it—she mixed her English up almost past all comprehension. This was a never-failing sign.

"Do you mean to tell me I didn't see the boy escape?" Gibbs roared, "to say nothing about feeling him?"

"Oh, my son, my son! you vas *padly* mistaken. De other poy is in de vell, an' likely to stay there, too. The poy you sawd vas von who chust come in to play ghost an' give me a scare. Dot vas all!"

"Ghost of your grandmother! It was that young Joe, I tell you, and if you say you threw him into the old well, you lie!"

"Oh! I tell you it vas true! Tom Smith struck him on his head, an' den ve pitched him right in an' covered him up. He's there, my son, as sure as death; an' v'at is surer as dot?"

Gibbs began to have a doubt.

"Will you swear to that?" he demanded.

"Py Moses, yes!"

"Well, I can't see— Look here, though! what is all this mud over the floor? Where did this come from?"

True enough, Joe had left his mark pretty well scattered around.

"Oh, my goodness!" the old woman gasped.

"Where did it come from?" Gibbs roared.

"Oh, my goodness, my goodness! It must peen der poy! He's some vay got out mit dat vell, an' crawled through de hole into de cellar. Oh!"

"Thunder and Mars! Do you mean to say you threw him into that hole with his hands free?"

"It vas Tom Smith, my tear; it vas Tom."

"Oh, the fool! With such a game at stake I should think he would have taken every precaution! And you— I've a notion to slit your neck, and slit it deep, too!"

"Oh, ton't look py me like dot, my son!"

"Your son! A fine specimen of a mother you are! I tell you now as I have told you before, I am Gibbs, and nothing else. Just drop that ma-

ternal whine of yours, if you please. Now, where is the girl? Has she escaped, too?"

"Oh, no, my—Mr. Gibbs, she is safe, she is safe."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

"Have you seen her since that young rat escaped?"

"No, put I—"

"But you're a fool! I'll bet he played ghost on you to allow the girl time to get out of the house! Come, get a move on you, and lead me up to her room. Lively, now!"

The old hag took up the lamp and led the way, trembling in every limb. Well she knew that if Gibbs's suspicion should prove true, his wrath would fall heavily upon her aged head.

When they arrived at the room where the girl was imprisoned, however, they found her there, and Gibbs's anger cooled down a little.

The poor girl implored them to set her free, but the hardened wretches only laughed at her misery, and after looking carefully around for a moment they descended to the lower part of the house again.

"Mighty lucky for you, old gal, that we found her there, I can tell you," Gibbs declared.

"Hullo!" he hastily added, "what's this?" And he turned toward the corner where the dwarfed negro lay, his attention being drawn by a groan which had escaped the poor darky as he began to regain consciousness.

"Oh! dot is Conch! De poy almost killed him!" the hag explained.

"The deuce he did! I thought Tom was to do the job for you."

"Vell, you see he started up to do it, an' I vent vid him to light de vay, put he packed out. Ve vent into de room under de von de poy vas in, an' talked de thing over a leetle, an' he vanted Conch to do it; so ve coom down an' sent Conch up. You see how he made out."

"Then how *did* you get at the boy?"

"Vell, he placked his face an' coom down to escape, put ve knowed him py his clothes, an' Tom struck him on de head an' laid him out."

"If he had only slipped into Conch's coat he might have got away; put he didn't tink of dot, or didn't have time to do it, an' so ve spotted him."

The negro began to groan more frequently now, and was soon able to sit up.

The gamin was not responsible for *his* life, worthless as it was. A negro's head is hard to crack.

"An' look here at my shirt!" "Mother" Hickley exclaimed. "I declare to goodness if dot poy didn't vipe all de plack off his face on it, an' some of de mud, too! See, here's de vooly vig he vore, too; I vonder vere he got dot?"

"I don't know, nor do I care," Gibbs answered, sullenly. "But I do know that this boy is lightning smart, and I'm afraid he'll give us trouble. Come, let's go down into the cellar and see how he managed his escape."

Again "Mother" Hickley took up the lamp and led the way.

They descended the old and rickety stairs, and then the beldam ambled across to where she knew there was a hole in the wall.

"Yes! yes!" she cried, "here it vas! See, he's dropped right down onto my pestonions, an' mashed more as a peck of 'em. Oh! if I had him here I'd make him eat 'em, every von! I vonder if he smelled 'em, an' so got onto de right road?"

Satisfied as to how Joe had effected his escape, they returned to the room above.

"I tell you, mother," Gibbs said, as he dropped onto a chair, "this game is gettin' weak at the knees. Too many blunders are being made."

"Oh! maype ve can get der poy ag'in, my tear!"

"That's not the only blunder that has been made, old gal, not by a good deal!"

"V'y, v'at else is wrong?"

"Why Mark has gone and stuck a pig in the eye."

"Stuck a pig in de eye!"

"Yes, so to put it. I mean he has allowed his part of the game to miscarry."

"How vas dot?"

"Why, you know he went to meet the man Allan, to drug and decoy him here, as we planned it. Well, he found him and got the drug into him, and then suddenly imagined that some one had seen him do it. He was so worked-up and nervous about it that he got off the train at a way station and waited for the next one. The consequence is, Allan has arrived in the city, and we do not know where he is."

"Oh! my goodness, my goodness! Vat a paby-calf de 'Captain' is!"

"He's worse! I thought he had a little sand in him, but I guess it's all dust."



"So it seems to pe."

"See here, Mother, do you know that we hold a good hand in this game?"

"Ha! ha! ha! chust vot I said ven Tom vent away! I said to my old self, sez I, 'Go your vay, my fine laddie, put ton't carry your head above your shoulders too High. I vork for those who pay the pest, and if you fail to give me my due, there may be von too many in this game.' Ha! ha! ha!"

"I see you've cut your eye-teeth, Mother."

"He! he! he! Vy, my son, I cut dem years an' years ago! So long ago, in fact, that I've almost vorn 'em out keepin' 'em sharp. Ha! ha! ha!" And as she laughed, the eye-teeth in question protruded from her shriveled mouth in a most hideous manner.

"If we wanted to, Mother, we could chip in a cold deal on them, splendidly."

"To pe sure ve could."

"We've got the girl, you see."

"Ha! ha! Yes, ve have got de girl!"

"And all this insurance stands in her name."

"To pe sure—to pe sure!"

Here they both laughed, long and loudly.

They hitched their chairs up close together, and then for half an hour or longer they conversed in low whispers, evidently afraid that the very walls would hear them.

But, to return to Joe.

## CHAPTER XI.

[BY CAPTAIN MARK WILTON.]

### JUBILEE'S PROTÉGÉ.

THE boy's chances seemed desperate indeed for a brief space of time, but the man's grasp had hardly tightened before it relaxed and his hands fell to his side.

"No, no!" he exclaimed. "Heaven forgive me, what mad idea was in my brain. Boy, you spoke only naturally, but you made a grave mistake. I am not intoxicated, nor do I drink strong liquors."

They were near a lamp-post, and as he rested one hand against it and stood unsteadily, the light fell full upon him. Accustomed to reading of faces, Jubilee Joe formed a new opinion of him as he thus saw his face plainly.

"You're sick, mister," he said.

"I am," was the hoarse reply.

"When was ye took?"

"I don't know, but I do know that I am in a bad way. Boy, you look honest, dirty as you are."

The two looked at each other, the stranger using an evident effort to collect his senses and, it seemed, to read the boy. On his own part, Joe saw a handsome young man of about twenty-five, who looked bold and manly, and who wore a sailor's dress.

"Reckon I will average with a crowd," Joe replied.

"I've lost my bearings, and am steering about without compass on an untracked sea. I have been drugged, and am about as fit to care for myself as a child. I have a little money. Can I trust you to see me anchored in a safe harbor?"

It was a request Joe would not always have regarded favorably, but he had taken a fancy to the stranger, and did not like the idea of leaving him to be preyed upon by the human sharks of the vicinity. But to what place could he take him? He was afraid the railroad men would not give him a place on the truck, where Joe himself slept, and he had no better quarters to offer.

Suddenly he remembered Johnny Flynn, his English friend, and the case was settled. Johnny was a good fellow at heart, as he had proved by saving Joe from his enemies when he hid under the table, and Joe felt sure he would give quarters to this stranger, since he had the money to pay for it.

And it was a safe, though humble, place.

So to Johnny's Joe conducted his new acquaintance, steadying his weak steps and talking in his whimsical way. His befogged protégé could not remember his own name, but he did remember that he had been on a sea voyage of some duration; that he had landed in New York and then taken the cars for Philadelphia. His dazed state of mind had begun soon after drinking a glass of water on the train.

Once at Johnny's, arrangements were soon made by which a room was given the sailor, he paying in advance.

Joe went up-stairs and helped him into bed. He soon fell asleep, and the boy was about to leave him when he noticed several marks in India ink on his arm, sailor fashion.

Joe examined them.

On one arm was a pictured ship under full sail; on the other, an anchor.

But the boy saw more.

In the middle of the anchor was a line of letters, running lengthways, and under a close scrutiny these soon resolved themselves into a name:

"ANDREW ALLAN. 11-2-50."

"Jemima P. C. Jenkins!" ejaculated the boy, "what's he got them there fur? That's ther name o' th' pound-cake crocodile what got his precious life insured fur twenty thousand dollars. Wonder why fur this sailor chap has sech a sign flyin' at his binnacle-head, or foretop-royal-peach-blossom yard, or whatever it's called? Look-a-here, Jubilee Joe, ther older you git ther more information you run onter. Reckon you may yit die with inflammation o' ther brain. B'gosh, I must think o' this, *sub rosary*. Be thar two Andrew Allans, or be thar less, or more? I guess there is, but nothin' is more unsartin than a sure fact. I'll sleep on it. Ef I can't do nothin' else, I kin play policy on 11-2-50."

So Joe went to bed himself, after taking a bath, for Johnny offered him quarters, and he was not going to neglect a chance to be near his protégé.

Remembering Laura Murray, he felt that he ought to inform some one in authority that she was held a prisoner at "Mother" Hickley's, but he had never had good luck when dealing with the police. They had always snubbed him in the past, and he felt sure they would laugh at him now if he asked for their help.

"No; I've got ter play a lone hand, an' if I don't hold trumps enough, I must stock ther kyards; that's all."

And he went to sleep.

In the morning he found his protégé somewhat better. He said his name was Andrew Allan, that he had formerly lived at Lancaster, but had been at sea for some time. He had come to Philadelphia, after landing at New York, because some one had sent for him; but who it was he could not tell, nor why they wanted him.

Joe decided that it was probable his head would become fully clear by night, so it was arranged that he should stay where he was until then.

This settled, the boy descended to the tap-room. There he found the loungers laughing over a letter some previous visitor had dropped. It was a gushing love-letter and, at first, Joe felt little interest in it. Later, when he read it, his views changed.

He had not forgotten his engagement to call at Mrs. Bradford's and see the false Laura Murray, to whom he had promised to deliver a letter which existed only in his mind.

Now the desired chance was offered him. This effusive love-letter did not contain the name of the young woman for whom it was intended; it would be the easiest thing in the world to deliver it to Sally Mark, *alias* Laura Murray, and make her think it was intended for her.

Believing this to be a good idea, Joe asked Johnny for the letter and received it. The good-hearted man also gave Joe a fresh suit of clothes to replace those he had taken into the well with him, which were coated with mud which stuck to them closer than a brother.

The new suit was a good fit; so good, in fact, that another boy of Joe's size might have stowed himself away in them at one and the same time.

Freshly equipped, the boy set out for Mrs. Bradford's, where he arrived without adventure. A ring of the bell brought a brisk young Irish girl to the door, and he asked to see "Miss Laura Murray."

"Begorra, why didn't ye come afore dhe milk-men was out?" she asked.

"If you take me ter be a drummer fur milk-an'-water, you've sot up my sign on th' wrong corner. Do I look like a tin-can fiend? See anything about me that resembles a pump? S'pose I keep cows on ther half-shell?" innocently inquired Joe.

"Go along wid your sassy tongue. What I mean to say is that this is no hour to call on a leddy. She ain't up wid dhe mornin' yit."

"Then I'll wait fur her. Reckon I kin enjoy myself jist as wal with sech a purty gal as you be, ez with any other gal, I do."

Kitty—that was her name—looked pleased at this flattery.

"But have yez really business wid dhe young mistress?"

"I hev a letter I am ordered under penalty o' a fu'st-class thrashin' ter deliver ter her own hands, an' no flea-blown 'Merican bloke ain't goin' ter play traitor this Centennial year."

This settled the matter, and Kitty invited him in and gave him a seat in the kitchen. She liked smart boys, and had taken a strong fancy to Joe.

The latter resolved to make good use of his time.

"Mrs. Bradford must 'a' been right glad ter see Laura," he carelessly observed.

"She was that, though she hadn't seen her since she was a baby; and Laura was more so to find her. Andrew Allan's comin', too, this forenoon."

"Is he, really?"

"Yis."

"It'll be a reg'lar family jamboree."

"I do hope they'll like each other," continued Kitty, volubly.

"So do I," said Joe, with a wise wink, though he had no idea about what she was talking.

"It would be an illegant wedding."

"Bang-up," Joe agreed.

"Do ye know dhe full partic'lars?"

"Not all on 'em. S'pose you elucidate while I wait."

"Oh! ye see it was an old family matter, an' Laura an' Andrew was betrothed whin she was a baby. Thin dhe Allans lift England an' come to Lancaster, an' soon afther Laura's father died—they was livin' in London. She wint to live in Yorkshire, an' stayed there till a year ago. Thin she came to America, an' wint to Lancaster, too; but Andrew was gone. Thin whin Laura's aunt died, she wint to live at Pittsburg. So Mrs. Bradford's letter from a London lawyer said. Ye see Andrew had gone to say, an' between us, I suspect he wint 'cause he didn't want to marry a girl picked out for him by some wan else. But no matter about that, since all has coom around roight."

"I know all this, straight ez a copper's club; but how did it git around all right?" carelessly inquired Joe.

"Oh! 'twas Mrs. Bradford, bliss her dear soul! She was an ould fri'nd o' Mr. Allan's mither, an' she wanted to bring thim together an' see if they could loike aich ither. She found out whin Mr. Allan's ship was due in New York, an' she wrote to him, an' to Laura at dhe same toime—she had Laura's address from the lawyer, you know—though niver a worrud did she give away to Laura; only tellin' her in dhe letteth that if she w'u'd coom she w'u'd get her employment; so Miss Laura accepted dhe invitation. She's here a'ready, an' Andrew Allan has sint word he'll coom dhe forenoon."

Joe began to see clearer.

"Ef they git spliced, how much fur boodle will th' two on 'em have ter stave off ther gnawin' pangs o' hunger an' sich?"

"Oh! they say dhere is thirty thousand pounds in ould England—that's near a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. But if they don't marry they won't git a rid cent."

"Jess so, jess so; an' that's why I hope they'll hitch horses."

"So do I. Have yez sane Mr. Allan?"

"Ya-as."

"Is he nice?"

"He's a purty good looker, you kin bet your last year's shoes. Didn't you never see him, Kitty?"

"Niver; an' what is funnier, he an' Miss Laura niver hev sane aich ither since they've growed up, an' Mrs. Bradford has niver seen him nayther, since he's grown to a man. Strange, ain't it?"

"The shadder o' a strangeness does seem ter fall athwart ther horizing," Joe agreed, "but I shall let them harness their own hosses, while I saw wood an' say nothin'."

"Ave coorse, an' so shill I."

Just then the sound of a bell summoned Kitty, and Joe was left alone, much to his relief. He wanted to think this complicated matter over.

"There's a light in ther East, an' I begin ter ketch onter ther p'int o' ther game started by Gibbsy, 'Cap' Mark an' Tom Smith. Laura Murray an' Andrew Allan was half-married, or, as Kitty calls it, betrothed—good word that; reminds me o' a steel-trap—when they was kids. One was brung up in London, an' t'other in Lancaster, Penny. They ain't see'd each other since they kin remember, an' Mrs. Bradford ain't see'd either since they was kids."

"Andrew, bein' a chap o' spunk, didn't like ther idee o' bein' married like a stick, so he run away ter sea, an' when Laura got ter Lancaster, he wa'n't thar. But Mrs. Bradford hez got ther idee o' bringin' them tergether. Wal, she's goin' ter git some sort o' cattle tergether, an' right here comes in ther fine Italian band o' Smith, Mark an' Gibbs. Ez Mrs. Bradford, Laura an' Andrew don't know each other from three bales o' hay, it is proposed ter work in Smith as Andrew, an' Sally Mark as Laura. Ez Daniel Webster said to ther flea, 'Thar's no great bite without some small bug.'"

"Now, what about my pard, with 'Andrew



Allan an 4-11-44'—or whatever it is—stamped onter his sailor arm? I reckon as how ther real A. A. looms up like a comical comet on a lush. But if they drugged him, ez seems likely, how does it happen he's floatin' round here loose? He's as dang'rous ter them as a ship with Yaller Jack on board. An' what about this insurance on Tom Smith's life, in Andrew's name? Oh! that's ez plain as a copper's stomach. They will try ter kill ther real Andy Allan, an' ther perdoce his defunct carkiss an' git ther twenty thousand. Reckon I ought ter put ther insurance folks onter this racket.

"But, hole on; go slow, Josey, you fresh young kid. Don't be too previous. Ef they prove Andy Allan dead, how is he goin' ter keep on livin' an' share ther boodle he gits by marryin' Laura Murray? Gosh all 'tater-bugs, thar's a weak p'int in my theorum. Reckon this water is too deep fur wadin' an' too thick fur swimmin'. Ther gang can't be arter both boodles, an' ther interrogatory rises, which boodle is wanted?"

Just then Kitty reappeared, and said that Mrs. Bradford and Miss Murray were in the sitting-room, and that Joe could go in and deliver his letter.

The boy, however, still had his latest puzzle in his mind, and he proceeded to ask the servant more questions. They brought him no information, and he walked slowly toward the sitting-room.

"Things is awfully mixed; wuss than a railroad smash-up, an' I need a backer. I'm a lame dog, jest now, an' orter be helped over ther fence. Who kin do it? I must see my pard, ther sailor chap. If he's recovered th' use o' his brains, mebbe he will know somethin'."

He had now reached the sitting-room door. He heard voices within, but, without stopping, he boldly opened the door and entered.

The false Laura Murray and an old lady were there—and some one else.

Jubilee stopped in sudden surprise, for he stood face to face with Tom Smith, alias Andrew Allan!

## CHAPTER XII.

[BY WM. R. EYSTER.]

### JUBILEE IN A PARLOR.

THE discovery made by Jubilee Joe came near knocking him down.

"I scream an' water millyuns, but here's a go!" was his mental exclamation. "Fur a boy thet's bin sharp'nin' his nose on every grindstun, from here ter Fairmo'nt Waterworks, this is ther delightfulest mix his mother's darlin' could a thort ov. Kin I, er can't I? Here goes, ef it takes a wheel off!"

Fortunately, Joe could think like lightning; and when he got through it all hung together. It was too late now for retreat, since he saw that the moment the door opened the eyes of the three were fixed upon him, and the only chances for him were to brazen it out, or try a new dodge altogether. Instantly his left eye took on a squint, and he ambled into the room with a limp and a twist in his leg, that was anything but like his ordinary mode of progress.

"Say, Misses Bradford, hes Jubilee Joe bin here yet this mornin'? The lantern-jawed, tortle-toed, red-headed, knock-kneed, hick-jop hes jest skinned me outen a half a case ef he hes, an' I'm goin' fur ter git even afore I'm through."

He was street Arab already, and he threw all the earnestness into his query that was necessary to make it sound like the genuine thing. The false Andrew Allan gave a great start, and then fell to eying the youngster keenly. Miss Laura Murray—as she was here known—looked uncomfortable; while Mrs. Bradford held up her hands at the unexpected apparition, exclaiming in a curious, cracked voice:

"Bless my heart, you rude, impudent boy! What do you mean by coming here? What do I know about 'Jubilee Joe,' and who are you?"

"Me? I'm Billy Butcher; an' I kin give yer ther hull fax in pertick'ler meter, an' friz ter suit ther condish of ther atmo-spear."

"But I do not want any facts. Get out of this, you little vagabond. I didn't mean it. Go away! Kitty! Kitty! Come and turn the little villain out."

Tom Smith had been watching his young enemy, but he was still fairly puzzled. He was inclined to think all boys were Jubilee Joe that morning—he had seen him a dozen times in a dozen different garbs on his way thither, and it was of Jubilee Joseph he had first thought when the youth entered the room.

The disguise that Joe Bindley had unwittingly

assumed had thrown him off the track, however; though with the sharpness of men of his stamp he scented a very large-sized rat in the meal-tub. He raised his head and looked again.

After the tumble into the mud of the old well Joe had to clean himself, and the fresh face, the well-combed hair, and the decent clothes made a complete disguise.

"A moment, Mrs. Bradford. These gutter-snipes don't generally trust themselves inside of a house unless they have an errand of some kind, and I really think it would be as well if we heard what he has to say. If he cannot give a good excuse for his intrusion, I assure you I will lift him over the doorstep with the toe of my boot. Will you allow him to proceed?"

"Certainly, Andrew, if you wish to hear. He gave me a start, coming in all of a sudden; and we have so much to talk about, anyway. Go on, little boy. What is it you wish to know? Tell us your whole story. You speak as though some one had injured you and you thought that we were in some way helping him."

"Guess ye'r out, right there. He ain't ther kind ov a snoozer ter want much help when it comes ter pullin' ther wool over ther eyes ov greenies like you 'pear ter be. Me an' Josey found a letter, an' Joe, he sed ez how ther thing were dropped by a feller he knowed, an' that he'd bin 'round an' seen ther ghal it was fur, an' she war ter gi'n him a dollar ter bring it 'round; ar' he sed halvers. But I wouldn't gi'n up ther letter, so me an' him fit; an' I jest whaled ther boots offen him."

"So I hed ther letter, an' he hed ther place it was ter go to; an' there we both was. So I played it fine, an' tole him ter shake, an' ef he'd tell me where it were ter go fur I'd divvy up his regulars. Then he tole me it were fur Sally Mark, w'ot lived here with Mrs. Bradford; an' we talked her over, an' 'greed ter kim 'round here early in ther mornin'."

"In that case I can't see that you have anything to complain of," interrupted Smith, quite coolly. "You are here with the letter, and if Joseph is not around to get his share of the promised dollar—which I do not think you will earn here—you are all the better off. Mrs. Bradford, have you any one in the kitchen answering to the name of Sally Mark?"

The false Laura Murray cast upon him a furious look, but before the old lady could answer, Joe broke in:

"Hold on! Yer ain't heerd ther wu'st ov it. When I were a-snoozin', round at Bolly De-wees's, he went through my kicksies; an' now he's got stiff an' all, an's goin' ter stun me outen me regulars. So, ef he comes, won't yer please nab ther slum an' beller fur a cop? You kin send ther coach-wheel round ter Bolly's, whar I roost, er I'll call here ag'in later. Josey'll hike it, when he sees yer fly ter his plant, an' I swear it'll save a settlement. Ef I stag ther nibs ov ther queer kid, I'll croake ther sneak, ef it fits me fur a wooden overcoat."

Mrs. Bradford looked from the boy to Andrew Allan in helpless amazement. This last was all Greek to her, though it was all flash to Tom, who could "weed the slang" himself with the best of them.

But what was the mystery about this letter for Sally Mark? and how was he to prevent the suspicions of Mrs. Bradford from being aroused?

He cast a sly glance at his confederate, and saw something in her face that satisfied him there was more in it all than even the boy let out. Perhaps some one was playing him false? If so, he had the chance to unearth the treachery through this youngster who had so opportunely turned up. And through him it would be easy to get this confounded Jubilee Joe into his clutches again. The failure of the attempt of Mother Hickley had not only frightened him, but it had shown that it was more than an ordinary youngster who, under the table at Johnny Flynn's, had heard enough to post him pretty well in regard to their plot.

He knew Sally was watching him keenly, and he did not want to let her into his little game, so he proceeded carefully.

"Ah, I think I understand; though you do make use of some very outlandish words. Of course you're laboring under a mistake. Perhaps this Joe whom you speak of has willfully deceived you. While you are wasting your time here, he has gone to the right house and made his dollar."

"Ef I find out thet he hes, I'll klem his nibs till his bugle hangs over his tile. Ef he tickles me fur a flat I'll kick him fur a mule, an' don't yer furgit it! So-long, pards! I'll see yer later."

"I am almost a stranger in the city," began Smith, "and may want a good, sharp boy for

an occasional errand. Indeed, I will need one this morning. When can I find you in?"

Smith's query was broken off by the sound of a ring of the door-bell. It was a steady, ponderous pull, that seemed to have the elements of respectability in its clang, and yet it caused at least two of those present to look anxiously around. Who was likely to be calling on Mrs. Bradford at that early hour of the morning?

Kitty came in briskly with a card, which she showed to her mistress.

"Bond, Bond," muttered the old lady, "oh, indeed! Well, Kitty, show him in."

So with Jubilee Joe still waiting for the unfinished question, and everybody more or less uncomfortable, the gentleman was ushered in.

"Ther main buildin' to a soap-box!" thought Joe. "Ef it ain't ther V. P., call me a brass-back, copper-bottom, A No. 1 liar! Kin he be after me? He's sursuspicious ov everythin' jist now, an' ef he claps peepers on me it won't be no slouch ov a job to fool him."

For the present, at least, Mr. Bond was fully engaged with Mrs. Bradford; and Tom Smith was too much interested in the intruder and what could be learned of his intentions, to finish his sentence, or even remember that there was a young man—by the possible name of Butcher—in the room.

The three made a group by themselves, and Jubilee Joe saw a chance to get in a little more of his work. Without delay he sidled over toward Miss Mark, and giving her a wink, that in its shrewdness defies description, he showed her the letter which he had held concealed in his hand.

Her eyes opened wide, and then snapped and sparkled. She understood. The boy was even sharper than she had thought.

Recognizing that this young man might be a lover of hers, he had thrown off suspicion in a wonderfully adroit way, at some risk to himself. Though not trusting herself to speak, even in a whisper, her lips fashioned the words:

"Good boy! I won't betray you; and I will reward you when there are no spectators to suspect. Just now I must see what is going on. Slip out the way you came while they are not looking."

Very good advice, that; but Joe had no intention of taking it as long as he could see something better. He nodded, passed the letter over, and then was ready to see what Ezra Bond, vice-president, could make out of Tom Smith, and learn, if possible, what chance had brought him there.

There seemed to be something strangely exciting about the meeting between the older two; but Joe Bindley had missed the preliminary part of the conversation, and could not make much out of the first scattered words that he heard, except that they were probably old acquaintances, who had lost sight of each other for years.

The first connected thought that the boy grasped was:

"And now you'll excuse me if I ask what the chance was that brought you here. I know you did not expect to see me."

"No, indeed; and you must forgive me for the truth so frankly expressed. I made some inquiries in the neighborhood as to who lived in this house; and even then your name suggested nothing. Not to make a mystery, I saw this young gentleman enter."

He gracefully waved his hand toward the fictitious Allan, to whom he had simply bowed on entering.

"We had some little business together, and afterward it struck me that I had been too easily impressed by his appearance and manner, and had learned too little about him and his circumstances. It was in search of such information that I entered your house, not knowing that I was going"—here he uttered a little laugh that brought the suspicion of an antiquated flush to the face of the elder lady, while he added—"to meet my fate."

"Do not be foolish, Ezra. I am too old to be flattered; and the saddest thing in life is to think of the long ago, and remember that it has gone forever."

She heaved an asthmatic sigh, and Jubilee Joe came near bursting right out. The sentiment, the sigh, and the old lady's high falsetto voice together were almost too much for him.

"The antiquated old hen! Ef he ain't made a mash on her you kin sell my mammy's eldest fur a supple-jack. Ef ther's a Mrs. Bond lyin' 'round loose, wonder ef I couldn't make a ten-strike by peddlin' w'ot I know about 1,200 Spruce street ter her. She makes me tired."

Ezra Bond did not seem to find it so ridiculous; but the ways of a man who has put business first



for a great many years are not easily changed. He went back to the subject in hand.

"I take it, then, that this gentleman is a friend of yours."

"What! Andrew Allan! To be sure, sir. I have tried to do some little good in my life, but never did I do anything that gave me more satisfaction than the bringing together of these two who have been so long separated—Mr. Allan and Laura Murray. Allow me to introduce to you my protégée, whom I had not seen for years until she came to me last night."

Sally Mark half raised from her seat, drooped forward in a graceful courtesy, and with downcast face murmured a word or two of answer to the introduction. The daughter of "Captain" Mark could hold her own anywhere.

It is true that she was there as a fraud upon Mrs. Bradford; that for the last few hours she had decided that she must go through the form of a marriage ceremony with the fictitious Allan; and imagined that she had a letter from another lover in her bosom; but she sat there as modest as a daisy and as brave as a lion.

Meantime an idea had struck Jubilee Joe, and he had been scribbling a line or two on a bit of paper, held in the inside of his hat. Just as he had smuggled the stub of pencil away, Mr. Bond's eyes rested squarely on him.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, "you're here, are you? I thought you were to call around at my office; I've a mind to turn you over to the police, as a swindler!"

"I've bin there," put in Joe, in haste. "Sign up sed 'Gone to the country, be back in a week. Knewed it was a bouncer tho', an' meant ter kim back ag'in this A. M. I'd 'a' bin there afore this, ef Josey hadn't a-went back on me. I didn't know where yer house were, an' it wa'n't no use ter hang 'round there when ther ranch were so empty it couldn't hear ther jigger bang. I seen him, though, an' it's hunky-dunk all ther way from Squedunk. Here's yer answer, an' he sez ef that ain't plain ernuff, when he sees yer royal nibs he'll tell yer some more."

Joe limped boldly forward and handed to Mr. Bond the piece of paper on which he had been scribbling.

"Oh, all right! Then you didn't forget that you had a quarter, and that I owned your time until you got back? My son—"

"Oh, stow yer whids, dad! Don't be lettin' ther secrets outen ther fambly! Still, ef I must tack Bond onter ther end ov Billy Butcher, don't ye think it's worth another quarter anyhow?"

"Don't be impudent, Billy, or the jobs will stop coming in. Here's your quarter; but the next time I want to wait twenty-four hours for an address, I'll go myself."

"All right, me noble guy. I'm through here, an' jest bin a-waitin' on you. I'll dub ther 'jig an' track ther dancers. When yer want me yer know where to find me, an' every time yer put yer forks on me, yer touch ther clean wedge."

As well as his assumed lameness would permit, he swaggered off the stage.

"A strange boy," remarked the Vice-President, as the door closed, "but in spite of his strange ways and slang, I find him shrewd and reliable; and, I hope, reasonably honest."

"Just so, Mr. Bond," responded Andrew Allan, who had been keeping an eye on the scrap of paper that Joe had handed to the Vice-President. His suspicions had been aroused, and he felt as though he would give something nice to see what was written on it.

The Vice-President had held it a moment in his fingers, and then thrust it carelessly in his vest-pocket without looking at it.

When they parted, the Vice-President did not notice that while Mr. Allan's right hand held his, his left hand grazed his vest, nor did he know that the corner of paper that had been visible there no longer protruded from his pocket.

The paper was totally forgotten. He had thought it only a bit of stage property, to carry out the drama, and would have been surprised could he have seen Tom Smith, around the next corner, gloating over his prize. It read:

"Ask Mrs. Bradford for Andrew Allan's birthday."

While he was conning this significant note, Sally Mark was holding in her hands a longer one that seemed to cause her some trouble, yet furnish some amusement.

"The worthless whelp," she was saying to herself. "It's a letter of Tom's after all; and he's gone on another girl. What did that young snoozer mean by giving it to me? There's some double work about this, and I must have a talk with pa. I've found out more here in a few hours than they did in as many weeks. Why didn't Tom stay, though? Confound him! It won't do for him to die now until he can leave me his

widow. And, as I dropped to that lay, I think I'll keep the biggest share of the proceeds myself. Still, if I don't give Tom his divy, he might kick; and as they'll have a pull on me, I'll have a hard enough time to bluff the rest. Oh, dear, the way of the wicked is rough."

She was staring out of the window. Now she saw a man approaching the house, who keenly eyed the front, and as he passed made a slight sign with his hand. It was Gibbs, looking as little like himself as possible. His signal indicated that he had something important to communicate.

"Confound the fool! How does he expect that I can get out to see him? And if I could it would be dangerous to be seen in his company. He'd sell his own mother for a cent."

She spoke pettishly, yet she knew very well that Gibbs was not the man to run any unnecessary risks; and as it happened that the visit of Mr. Bond had rather upset Mrs. Bradford, so that she left her visitor alone for a little while, Sally saw her chance and sallied out.

She turned down the next side street, and presently came face to face with Gibbs, who was slowly sauntering back.

"See here, young man," she said, in a low tone, "what are you skylarking 'round here for? If you want to make a clean bu'st-up just do it some more. If you want to get word to me you must talk to pa, or Tom."

"If I could have found Tom, you bet I wouldn't have come poking my nose into these regions. It was the 'Captain' that sent me. He wanted you and Tom to know that the girl has gone to old Grim."

"Not dead?" exclaimed Sally.

"Very dead, if you want to have it that way. Cut all up into little pieces and packed in a box."

He grinned at the way cool Miss Sally was upset, and then hastily added:

"Mam made a mess of it last night, and she slipped the slum. I twigg'd her as she went through, and hiked it after her, lively. There didn't happen to be a soul around at first, and she was too scared to yell. When she reached Spruce street she tried to mount a car, fell under the wheels, and that was the last of her. Of course we had nothing to say, but there wasn't enough left of her face to swear by."

#### CHAPTER XIII.

(BY WILLIAM R. EYSTER.)  
A REAL DECOY.

If Ezra Bond did not notice the abstraction of the paper from his vest-pocket, some one else did. Keen as Tom Smith thought himself, he had failed to catch sight of Master Joe, who was watching the leave-taking with thorough disgust.

"Blame my eyes ef that man's any more fit ter do biz than a basswood dog with a poplar tail! He ter come snookin' 'round, messin' everythin' up! Why, dog bite him! ain't I on ther trail? I've a mind ter—yes, it almost makes a feller feel like wringin' in on t'other side! An' he hedn't sense enough ter freeze outen ther biggest p'int in ther game—leavin' outen 'count ther feller I've got cooped down at Johnny Flynn's. Betcher sweet life he's ther 'rigernal Jacobs. An' ef them marks mean anything, I'll put up all Fillymaclink ag'in a match-box that he weren't twenty-six years, three months, an' ten days old, September fifth, eighteen seventy-six. 'Pears ter me that makes a diff'rence ov 'bout six months—an'—Blast Mr. V. P.! he's ther feller ter work out ther figgers! It's too deep fur me; but I'm bettin' that wouldn't read '11-2-50.' Hol' on! Clap a hot poultice on quick! An idee hits me—hard! That or'nary fiste's goin' somewheres ter digest, an' I'll skin it back to Mrs. Bradford's an' ax her myself. I hate ter lose sight on him; but it's too good a dot ter miss. Here goes."

He hit his chance admirably well, for, just as he came in sight of the house again, Sally Mark was sailing off to interview Gibbs, leaving the coast clear.

To his ring, Mrs. Bradford herself answered.

As he was in a hurry, he wasted no time with superfluous words.

"Mister Bond sent me back, ma'm. It's ther question he were goin' ter ax yer hisself, when ther twinklum in yer eyes knocked him all abroad. He can't fill up ther papers till he knows it sure frum some one else. When were Mister Allan born?"

That Joe was the messenger of the Vice-President of the insurance company would not seem so improbable, after what she had lately heard. In fact, she had not the least suspicion.

"His birthday? Yes. Let me see. I know it well enough. I was looking at the figures only the other day. It was the second of November,

1850. Wait. I'll get a pencil and write it down for you. You may forget it."

"I ain't furgittin' much, but here's yer pencil. If it ain't writ, he may think I'm a-workin' roots. That's it. Thank'e. Thatsettles it. Ye'r a good woman, an' we make a team. Day-day! Who sez Jubilee Joe can't climb a chimbley!"

He was off before the old lady could return him an answer; and he went dancing down the street in utter forgetfulness of his assumed lameness.

As a general thing, Joe kept up with the news of the day; a percentage of his first shine going, if necessary, toward the purchase of a morning paper.

This morning he had been too busy even to listen to the chant of the newsboys, until now he turned up an ear.

"Hyar's yer mornin' papers! All erbout ther gal w'ot got killed on Spruce!"

Jubilee Joe had girl on the brain just then. A cold chill dropped off his brain, ran down the nape of his neck, and fell into his boots.

"Here, Jakey! What's that about a gal?" "Tried to get on er street-car, an' face mashed to a jelly. Fork over yer nickel an' git yer right change back!"

Joe caught a glimpse of the head-lines, and then invested. He had, somehow, a presentiment, and his hand shook a little as he read how a girl came rushing wildly into Spruce street, and how there was a scream and a jolt. When the body was picked up, life was nearly extinct: the face presented a horrible spectacle; and a wound on the temple would alone have been sufficient to cause almost instant death. Nothing could be learned of her except that she had been seen flying along the cross street, and that from some direction a rumor had floated around that her name was Sally.

Joe scratched his head, brushed his eyes with his coat-sleeve, and then stuffed the paper into his pocket for future reference.

"I might a-knowned it! Passed in her checks, an' went up ther flume while I were a-sashayin' round town with young 4-11-44. Ther fat's all in ther fire now, an' that nin ov a Ezry Bond kin jest take my keards an' play out ther hand."

"No! I'll be durned an' double durned ef he kin!" he added, with sudden vehemence.

"Laura Murray's dead; Andrew Allan is blind crazy; uncle Ezry's a blasted fool; an' ther gang that's workin' roots don't need ter git a file ter make ther eye-teeth sharp. But Joe Bindley's still around, fur blood an' ha'r. Let 'em twirl ther jenny fur all that's in ther bank; but afore it stops Jubilee Joe'll be there fur vengeance! Now fur ther genooine Allan. He's all ther capital I've got left, an' I dunno ef he's enuff ter start a bank er not."

He had no particular plan of operations just now, but he intended in some way to checkmate the rascals, and, if possible, to bring them to justice.

He—Joe—entered Flynn's very quietly, and made his way to the room he had secured for the stranger. So afraid was he of wakening his charge that he touched the door very lightly, and only opened it a little bit.

Allan was sleeping sweetly indeed; but by his bedside, scrutinizing him with a keen gaze, stood the man of all men whom Joe least desired to see there—Tom Smith, the false Andrew Allan. One bared arm of the sleeper had been flung out from under the cover, and staring him in the face Smith saw the mark—"Andrew Allan—11-2-50."

Smith mastered it and the situation of affairs at about the same time. He turned toward the door, and Joe had just time to shrink away and dart a few steps up the garret stairs, when he came out and went directly to his own room.

Presently Joe came sidling in, just in time to see Allan wake up, with eyes and brain reasonably well cleared by his long sleep.

At first he had some difficulty in identifying the boy; but he had a glimmering remembrance of what happened the previous evening, and recognized him at length.

"Oh, you've got a bully good furgetter! How are yer on ther recomember? Maybe yer kin mind gittin' yer life insured."

The young man looked up, smiling strangely enough.

"Why, yes, now that you speak of it, I do."

"Who for, and in what sum?" continued the boy, more than ever interested and excited.

"Twenty thousand dollars, for the benefit of a young lady named Miss Laura Murray; but I can't help but remember that I am indebted to you for taking good care of me."

"Dry up on that!" shouted Joe. "I'd 'a' done ez much fur a brindle purp with a glass eye. Now, jest say it war done yestervay



mornin', Tuesday, September the fifth, in this year of grace an General Washington—1876, right here in ther city of Phillymaclinkadelfy-i-a, down at th' office of Ezra Bond, whar I took ye, an' I'll throw up ther spung. I'll say ther fat is in ther fire, an' Cap. Mark an' Co. kin take ther pan. Now, let's hear ye say some-thin'."

"What are you talking about? The policy is in the Equitable, taken out in New York a year ago; and I know nothing about any Ezra Bond, nor was I in this city for the whole year, until last evening, just before I met you."

"Good enough!" shouted Joe, clapping his hands. "Now I'm fly to ther hull game, an' a wall-eyed mule with a game leg c'u'd bu'st ther snoozers wide open an' take 'em all apart. Poor Laura! It's a pity fur her; but they didn't give me room ter turn meself accordin' ter my size, an' so it wa'n't any wonder they got away with my baggage. Ther only thing left is ter git even, an' a leetle more so."

"Whom do you mean by 'Laura?'" inquired the young man.

"Laura Murray, of Lancaster."

"Heavens! How do you come to know anything about her? and what's the matter with her?"

"Nothin's the matter now; she's dead."

"Dead!"

He was more surprised than Sally Mark had been. With a bound he was out of bed and hastily throwing on his clothes.

"In a hurry, ain't yer? Fur a sick man, I'd say you was right spry. May ez well wait till I kin bring yer full pertick'lers. She can't be buried till ter-morrow."

As the young man was so excited, Joe kept his head cool; and watching Allan, threw his arms around him just in time to save him from falling heavily to the floor.

"Tho'rt so. Ther blaze has nigh took ther stiffenin' purty well outen yer. You git back ter bed till ye'r stronger, an' I'll go sot a inquest on ther corpus-licked-us. An' ez Tom Smith 'll be tryin' his dirty games, ef he hez the show, I'll hev Johnny put a man 'round to head him off. Ef yer keep on doin' well, I rec'on yer kin go out this P. M., if yer wants to, an' take a squint at ther girl yer were ter marry."

"See here. How do you know—"

But Joe was already out of hearing.

Having made his arrangements with Flynn, he hurried off down the street. A sudden hope had dawned upon him and he wanted to inspect the corpse.

Scarcely had he emerged from the narrow cross-street and turned the corner, when Andrew Allan, white and shaky, stole out of the saloon and staggered away toward the other side of the block. He had lost no time, and so eluded Flynn, who, five minutes later, found his room empty.

At the corner Allan lurched against a lamp-post, and holding on to it, stared around him in a dazed, uncertain sort of way.

A voice in his ear hardly recalled him to himself.

"Excuse me, sir, if I am mistaken; but you look to be in trouble. Can I help you any?"

Allan looked up and saw a young gentleman, almost a counterpart of himself.

"Thank you," he answered, trying to brush away the misty film that would curtain his eyes. "Did you hear anything about a young lady being killed last night? Laura Murray was her name, and I'm her friend. I'm trying to find her."

The aristocratic-looking young man started as though some one had slapped his face; but quickly recovered his self-possession, though evidently by an effort.

"Ah! the accident on Spruce street. How fortunate! You can clear up the mystery. I can take you to the body, because I happen to be one of the coroner's jury. Here. Take my arm to yonder hack. You seem to be too weak to walk. We will be there, then, in a jiffy."

And Johnny Flynn, alarmed somewhat for the gentleman who had been left in his charge, and making instant search, came bolting along just in time to see him following some one into a hack.

The driver whipped up his horses, the vehicle rattled away, and Johnny could only suspect that the other occupant of the carriage was another of his boarders, Tom Smith, the fictitious Andrew Allan.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

(BY T. C. HARPAUGH.)

#### JUBILEE AT THE INQUEST.

JUBILEE JOE knew where to find the coroner's office, where was to be held the inquest over the

body of the young girl found mangled by the car on Spruce street.

Joe was not long in reaching the coroner's office, the front door of which was open and besieged by a crowd of people.

A big policeman who looked all dignity had stationed himself in the doorway, and Joe recognized in him the very man who had forced him to leave the hack to which he had clung on the night Laura Murray was decoyed from the depot and into the meshes of the conspirators.

The boy had reasons for knowing that policemen are blessed with good memories, and he at once began to avoid the eyes of this M. P., who had stationed himself in the front door of the coroner's office.

The young bootblack detective now began to nudge his little body forward, worming himself through the crowd with the dexterity of an imp.

Joe knew well just what he wanted to do, and with one eye fixed on the policeman whenever he could see that individual, he kept on until he found himself beyond the door and in the room where the coroner was conducting in person the investigation of so much importance to the boy.

The room was rather commodious for an office, and Joe found it well crowded with a somewhat motley crowd, many of whom he knew were not witnesses but had been drawn thither out of curiosity.

The coroner's jury was composed of well-to-do citizens living in the vicinity of the office, and the most of them were old veterans at the business, who knew just how a verdict should be worded to convey the right impression.

Joe was brought to a stand by hearing the coroner's clerk call the name of "Achilles Spriggs," and saw a youngish man with a sandy mustache step forward toward the witness-chair.

"What is your occupation, Mr. Spriggs?" asked the fat and fussy little coroner, when the witness had been sworn.

"I drive a street-car," was the reply.

"Is Spruce street a part of your line?"

"Yes, sir."

"Were you driving the car which last night had the—misfortune to strike the—ah! yes—the unfortunate subject of this coronial investigation?"

"I was."

"Just so," continued the coroner. "Now, Mr. Spriggs, you may elucidate to the jury the circumstances of the lady's sudden taking off. Speak slowly and pronounce distinctly, so as to allow my clerk to take your testimony *verbatim et literatim*."

Achilles Spriggs seemed confused by the to him incomprehensible wind-up of the coroner's sentence, but soon collected enough thoughts to proceed in an intelligible manner.

He gave a straightforward story of as much of the accident as he had witnessed, which did not take long, and subsided suddenly and before some people thought him near the end.

"Did the lady appear to have any friends in the vicinity?" asked the coroner.

"No, sir."

"Didn't anybody in the car at the time recognize her?"

"I believe not."

"And nobody among the crowd attracted by the accident?"

The driver hesitated for a moment.

"I recollect, now, that I saw a man look at the corpse and remark that it was a bad go for a young girl who was far from home and without friends in Philadelphia," he said.

"You didn't know the man?"

"No, sir."

"He isn't here now, is he, Mr. Spriggs?"

The car-driver turned and began to survey the crowd behind him.

"It warn't me, as I'm not afraid ter look 'im in the eye," said Joe, to himself. "Hello! who is the feller dodgin' thar? By jiggeree! it's ther boss ov 'em all—the sweetest-scented cherubim ov ther whole lot—'Captain' Mark himself!"

Until that moment Joe had not seen this man, whose elbows almost touched him, and it was the "Captain's" efforts to avoid the searching eyes of Achilles Spriggs that called the boy's attention to him.

The car-driver had by this time given up his search, and told the coroner that the man who had made the commiserating remarks about the girl was not in the house.

The assurance seemed to relieve "Captain" Mark, and he again became interested in the proceedings, but from that time on he was narrowly watched by Joe.

After the driver, several other witnesses were

called, but they threw no additional light on the subject. It seemed from all that the boy had heard, that the victim of the accident had used too much haste in trying to board the car, and had in consequence of her rashness lost her life.

"Mebbe ef they'd call Cap'n Mark thar they'd learn suthin' thet'd stonish 'em," murmured Jubilee Joe. "Couldn't I throw a bomb-shell inter this court ov death by makin' a simple suggestion? Guess I won't, though; guess by Philamajig! I'll not put any more witness-bees inter thet old high-kicker's pocket. Not for Joe, thankee, no."

The coroner rather abruptly announced the conclusion of the investigation, and the policeman at once began to clear the room. Joe went out with the crowd and watched "Captain" Mark stroll away with a pleased expression on his villainous countenance, but did not quit the vicinity himself.

He stayed around until about half an hour later, when he saw the members of the jury file out and separate into little groups.

"They've filled up ther same old form, 'bout Providence takin' ther girl off, with no blame attached to ther street-car line. They'll all expect a pass over ther road fer thet verdict."

"Shine! shine! shine 'em up fer half a dime! an' make 'em reflect yer piety an' good character!"

Joe approached one of the jury as he shouted his occupation at the top of his lungs, and had his foot upon the box before the man could remonstrate.

"Only five cents, boy? sartain?"

"Thet's all. I never humbug the prominent citizens ov Philadelphia. Bad go, thet on Spruce last night."

"Ter'ble," said the man.

"Reckon you blamed nobody?"

"We couldn't. The girl used too much haste an' got killed; that's all there was of it."

"Ov course. Whar is ther corpse?"

"Down at the undertaker's, at Cecil's. Another grave in the Potter's field, boy."

"One more unfortunate," said Joe, whose eyes looked moist, and his brushes flew faster than ever over the tops of the juryman's boots. Thar ye ar', mister! Toss yer nickel down this way, an' I'm off!"

Joe was promptly paid by the man, and lost no time on his way to the undertaker's shop. He did not know this personage, but that did not prevent him from entering his office and accosting him without a moment's hesitation.

"Say, mister, could an American citizen ov my size get a squint at ther victim ov ther Spruce street accident?" asked Jubilee Joe. "Hit's no morbid curiosity. I'm lookin' for a lady friend what's been missin' fer five days, an' strange corpses ar' gittin' all-fired common nowadays."

The undertaker looked for a moment as if he was going to refuse Joe's request, but all at once he said:

"Go into that room there and take a look."

Joe was not slow about accepting the favor, and the next minute he was gazing upon the victim of the accident, the dead body of the supposed Laura Murray.

"That's enough. I'm satisfied," he said, turning away. "I'll bet my bank-stock that that girl never saw Lancaster, an' never heard ov Andrew Allan. I'll go back an' cheer Allan up, an' then I'll get a look into this beautiful conspiracy. Look out for breakers, Gibbsy an' Cap'n Mark!"

#### CHAPTER XV.

[BY DETECTIVE DOUGLASS.]

JUBILEE "FETCHES" GIBBS.

JUBILEE JOE returned at once to Johnny Flynn's, and there learned of the real Andrew Allan's departure in company with Tom Smith. He felt both indignant and discouraged.

Sitting down at one of the tables he buried his face in his hands, and thus remained for some time in deep thought.

"What shall I do?" he muttered. "Shall I go an' blow et all out ter th'perlice? Nix-ee! They'd claim all ther honors fer th'erselves!"

"What then? Ef I could only git Gibbsy into a tight hole, an' make him come over ter my side— By th' great George Henry Washington! that's jist ther idee! Wonder where I kin find him, though?"

"By ther great O. P. Q. Jackson! he's jist ther huckleberry I want now, an' I want him bad. No time left now ter do enny more detective work. This here b'ile is jist about ripe, an' it'll bu'st afore I know et."

The boy was just about to start out when some one entered the saloon—Gibbs himself.

The villain was looking savage enough to an-



nihilate a person, and after he had gulped down a glass of whisky he turned to leave the place.

But Joe called him back.

"Lookeer heer, Gibbsy, I wanter see ye a minnit!" he said. "Got some 'portant biz; an' ef ye kno' when yer skin's safe, you'll come an' set down."

"What do you mean?" Gibbs demanded.

"Bizness!" Joe assured grimly. "Ef you don't wanter hear it you'll wish ye hed, when ye git to Moya."

The villain uttered an oath and sat down.

"What do you mean?" he growled.

"I mean that ye'r playin' a big game, but ye'r goin' ter fail; an' *your* only show is ter do ther traitor act, ter save yerself. Ef ye don't ye go ter jail along wi' Tom Smith, Mark an' Sal!"

"You don't mean—"

"You bet I do! I've bin playin' greased-light-nin' detective, an' me an' th' Insurance Company is dead on th' racket. Ther hull game is up, an' jail aire a-waitin'!"

"You get out! You're—"

"Dry up! What I say is true. 'Tain't no use o' yer tryin' to squeeze out. That gal w'at got killed on Spruce warn't no Laura Murray. Oh! I'm fly! Tell you what, Gibbsy, yer only show is ter come over ter *our* side."

"By doin' that you'll save ten years up th' Pennypack. Mebbe, too, it can be arranged so th' company'll pay ye, ef ye open yer mouth wide enuff."

Gibbs looked thoughtful.

"Do you think so?" he demanded, after a moment.

"Yes. You make a statement, givin' th' hull thing away, an' I'll fix it."

"You! Bah!"

"Yas; me!"

"I'll have to see the money first."

"Will you squeal if ye'r paid fer it?"

"Yes; providing I am not got into trouble. I am doing it now on my *own* hook. Mark and I have had a growl, and I am no fool!"

"Where did Smith take Allan?"

Gibbs looked surprised.

"You young imp!" he ejaculated. "How did you find out so much?"

"Oh! I'm a hoss at thet kind o' bizness! Ye hain't answered me, though."

"I know where he is."

Joe reflected.

"You stay here 'til I come back," he said. "I'll see Ezra Bond, an' make terms fer you. Don't you leave here. Johnny, if this feller leaves yer place have him arrested."

Flynn nodded.

"See here, boy," Gibbs suddenly exclaimed. "If I'm going to sell out this game, I'll go to old Bond and make my own bargain. I won't have a boy like you doing business for me."

"Oh! yer won't, hey?"

"No, I won't, hey!"

"Now, Gibbsy, see here! You jest look plumb-center inter my organs ov sight fer 'bout a fraction of a second, an' let's know ef ye kin see enny green in there. D'ye suppose that I went through old 'Mother' Hickley's crib last night 'thout pickin' up er few solid p'int's?"

It was Joe's last card, but it proved his best. To his surprise Gibbs turned pale as death, and sunk down upon a chair. It was quite evident that Joe's shot had struck a secret tender spot.

"I'll wait," he said, "but I'll put a bullet through you if you play me any tricks."

"Never fear!" Joe replied, and left the saloon. In half an hour more he stood in Ezra Bond's private office.

"Well?" the vice-president said, looking up, "what do you want?"

"I'm heer ter 'stonish ye!" Joe replied. "Ye know ther policy ye issued on Andrew Allan?"

"Yes."

"Well, ye'r out yer twenty thousan'!"

"What!"

"Ye've bin tuk in an' done fur. That Allan ain't Allan at all, but one Tom Smith, an' there's been a big job put up ter cheat ye. I've figgered it all out, an' hev got one o' th' gang to squeal on th' hull game, pervidin' he's let off scot free, an' paid fer what he tells. How much will ye give him ter expose th' hull game?"

Bond looked astonished.

"Can this be true?" he exclaimed.

"Bet yer sweet life it aire!" Jubilee answered. "I tried ter put yer onto ther racket wunst, but yer didn't ketch on. What did yer do with that bit o' paper I guv ye up at Mrs. Bradford's?"

"Why, here it is in my vest pocket. I never thought of it again," and the vice-president of the company thrust his thumb and finger into his pocket to bring the paper forth but no paper was there.

"Yer don't seem ter find it, I guess."

"You are right, my boy. Do you know where it is?" and he eyed Joe sharply.

"Guess I'd orter! I seen Tom Smith take it outen yer pocket!"

"Go ahead, my boy; tell me all."

Joe rattled on, and gave him a hurried account of how he had found out that there was so gigantic a scheme afoot to defraud the company. Bond called in the president and repeated to him what Joe had related.

"My boy," said the president, surveying Joe keenly, "if this be true you shall be richly rewarded. As for the person whom you mention, if he gives us the full details of the plot, so that we are able to save ourselves and secure the offenders, he shall have his liberty and a thousand dollars!"

"It's a bargain! Shall I bring him here?"

"Yes, and at once."

Jubilee hastened away in a jubilant mood.

He returned to Flynn's and found Gibbs still there.

When he made known the insurance company's offer Gibbs arose.

"That settles it!" he decided. "A thousand dollars in hand is better than twenty in the bush! I'll make a clean go of it. I will confess all."

En route to the office he explained about the real Laura Murray. Fearing Mark and Smith's schememight fail he and "Mother" Hickley had gotten up a scheme of their own. He had witnessed the accident to the unknown girl by the Spruce street car, and perceiving that the unfortunate girl's garments were almost like those worn by Laura Murray, he and the old hag had accordingly plotted to remove Laura from the den to another place of safety and represent to Mark and Smith that it was *she* who had been killed by the street-car.

When they arrived at the insurance office he made a clean breast of the whole plot.

About a year before, the chief conspirator—Tom Smith, *alias* a dozen other names—it was hard to say which was his right one—had been employed in an insurance office in New York, where Andrew Allan, of Lancaster, had taken out a policy for \$20,000 payable to Laura Murray.

When he learned that Allan had afterward gone to sea, he formed a scheme to get possession of the money pending on the man's life. A consort of his, Mark, by name, chanced to know considerable about Allan and Laura Murray, being an Englishman, and he and Smith entered the plot as partners, later adding Gibbs.

As Allan was to return from sea in '76, and would, as a natural consequence, visit the Centennial, Smith took out another insurance in Philadelphia, as Andrew Allan; making it payable to Sally Mark, who was to play the part of Laura Murray.

When the real Andrew Allan should arrive in Philadelphia, he was to be decoyed and killed, and his face and person so mutilated as to render him unrecognizable, except by the name on his arm, which "Captain" Mark knew he wore.

Then Sally Mark was to draw the money on his life, and there was to be a "divvy" and a "clear-out."

Mark had done much of the plotting. Knowing that Mrs. Bradford had been a friend of the Allan and Murray families in days gone by, he had a letter sent from England to reach her, from a pseudo-lawyer, suggesting that she try and bring the real Laura and Allan together, and lead them to marry, in order that the English estate might be settled, giving Laura's address as Pittsburg.

Mark was the only one of the rascals who knew anything about the English estate, and never a word said he to his accomplices about it until Sally made the discovery, when she told Smith and Gibbs herself.

Mark thought that Sally was in love with Smith, and his plan was to let them marry and then "bleed" them unmercifully for "hush-money."

He could have let his daughter into the secret, 'tis true; but thinking her devoted to Smith, he did not know what the result might be to himself.

It was a quarrel over this second "boodle" that had caused the rupture between the "Captain" and Gibbs.

It was by Mark's maneuvering that Laura had started for Philadelphia; it was by Mark's maneuvering that a pseudo-Lancaster lady recommended her to Mrs. Bradford.

When Laura arrived in Philadelphia, she was decoyed by Gibbs to "Mother" Hickley's where it had been arranged to substitute Sally Mark, and have *her* visit Mrs. Bradford, as shown.

Sally Mark had been in Pittsburg for a few

weeks, and it was there Mrs. Bradford had written to her—or, as she supposed, the real Laura Murray—inviting her to visit Philadelphia. Thus Sally fell into her place easily enough.

Through the London accomplice, who pretended to be a lawyer, Mrs. Bradford was advised what time the real Andrew Allan would arrive in New York, and she had written to him, summoning him immediately to Philadelphia.

Of course Smith was on hand in New York to intercept that letter; and, armed with it, his position was secure.

It was on his return to Philadelphia that he accosted our hero and asked the way to the insurance company's office, desiring to play his part perfectly in all its minor details.

When the *true* Allan reached New York, he was met by the telegram sent by Mark in Mrs. Bradford's name, and started for Philadelphia as directed.

Mark joined that train at Trenton, found his man, and took a seat beside him. The drinking-glass in the car mysteriously disappeared, and Mark kindly offered Allan the use of a private cup which he carried in his valise, and thus drugged him. The drug took effect at once, and being, as he supposed, detected, Mark got off at the next station and waited for another train.

It was purposed to hold the real Laura prisoner till the insurance money was secured, and then to set her at liberty.

This, and much more that is known to the reader, Gibbs explained.

He also told all in regard to his and "Mother" Hickley's plot, that when the bogus Laura Murray should try to get the insurance money, they—Gibbs and Hickley—were to expose the whole game and produce the real Laura, in hopes the company would liberally reward them.

The real Andrew Allan, he said, was confined at "Mother" Hickley's, whither Smith had taken him in the cab, and where Smith and Mark, no doubt, would try to make 'way with him.

Laura Murray, the real, was imprisoned at the house of one of "Mother" Hickley's friends.

But little more remains to be told.

The insurance company at once procured warrants, and sent detectives to arrest Mark, Smith, Sally and others; and, guided by the gamin, they secured them with but little trouble.

Andrew Allan and Laura Murray were rescued, and taken at once to the home of Mrs. Bradford.

Ezra Bond was present, of course, as was the now victorious and irrepressible Joe, who, of course, was the hero of the hour. To him belonged the honor of breaking up one of the greatest conspiracies that ever came to light in the Quaker City.

Considering the magnitude of the scheme, and the cool and cunning villains he had to deal with, it was one of the quickest pieces of detective work on record; it having occupied but scant thirty-six hours in the working up!

Tom Smith and Sally Mark made a desperate fight to prove they were the persons they pretended to be, in order to secure the vast English estate, but they failed. The name and birth-date on Andrew Allan's arm were sufficient to "knock Smith out of time."

They and "Captain" Mark received severe sentences.

Gibbs got off, with his thousand dollars; but a short time later he was arrested for another offense, and sent to "Moya" for a long term.

Patsy O'Neill, the rascally groggery proprietor, soon found himself in the same institution.

Johnny Flynn, the saloon keeper, "not so rascally," now rules and reigns in a "hEnglish hAle 'Ouse" in a far better part of the city, and is doing well.

"Mother" Hickley was found dead in her house, about a year after the close of the great exposition.

Now, for our good people:

Andrew Allan and Laura Murray were married, of course; and so was the widow Bradford to Ezra Bond, her old lover!

Jubilee Joe, the Chain-Lightning Detective, as he was thereafter christened by all his street chums, never reported what his reward was, but evidently it was not a small one, for he gave up his boot-black calling, and, under the advice of his friends, spent the next five years at one of the very best schools in the State.

At present, over the door of a neat little office on the lower part of Chestnut street, is the sign:

JOSEPH BINDLEY,  
SPECIAL AND PRIVATE DETECTIVE.

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